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"He took Genevieve within his arms."

THE ROMANCES OF ALEXANDRE DUMAS

THE CHEVALIER DE MAISON ROUGE

Volume Two

The Marie Antoinette Romances

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CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MUSCADIN.

It was near two o'clock. Lorin was promenading up and down in Maurice's room, while Agesilaus polished his master's boots in the antechamber, only for the greater convenience of conversation the door remained open, and during his walk Lorin often stopped and questioned the official.

"And you say, Citizen Agesilaus, that your master left home this morning?"

"Oh, upon my soul! yes."

"At the usual hour?"

"It might be ten minutes earlier, or ten minutes later, I cannot say exactly."

"And you have not seen him since?"

"No, Citizen."

Lorin continued his walk, and after three or four turns again stopped and renewed his questions.

"Had he his sword with him?" demanded he.

"When he goes to the section he invariably carries it.'

"Are you sure he has gone to the section?"

"He told me so, at least."

"In that case I shall join him," said Lorin; "but in case I miss him, tell him I have been here, and am coming back."

"Wait!" said Agesilaus.

"Why?"

"I hear his footstep on the staircase."

Almost at the same moment the door opened, and Maurice entered. Lorin bestowed a hasty glance upon him, and perceived nothing extraordinary in his appearance.

"So you are come at last," said he. "I have been waiting here these two hours."

"So much the better," said Maurice, smiling; "that has afforded you plenty of time to compose distichs and quatrains."

"Alas! *mon ami*," replied the improvisator, "I do not make them now."

"Why, is the world coming to an end?"

"My dear Maurice, I am very unhappy."

"You unhappy?"

"Yes, I am miserable. I am suffering from remorse."

"Remorse?"

"Oh, by Heaven! yes," said Lorin. "Between you and her I had to choose! — between you and her I could not hesitate; but, you see, Arthémise is in despair, for she was her friend."

"Poor girl!"

"And it was she who gave me her address — "

"You would have done much better to have allowed things to take their natural course."

"Yes; and at this very moment you would have been condemned in her stead. Powerfully argued, dear friend. And I came to ask your advice! I thought you were wiser than that."

"Never mind, ask away."

"This poor girl: do you understand? I wish to attempt some means of saving her. Even if I could only give or receive a blow in her defence, I feel as if it would do me good."

"You are mad, Lorin," said Maurice, shrugging his shoulders.

"Perhaps if I made an appeal to the Revolutionary Tribunal?"

"It is too late, she is condemned."

"Truly," said Lorin, "it is dreadful to see this poor girl sacrificed thus."

"The more so since it was my safety that has entailed her death. But after all, Lorin, we have one consolation. She was a conspirator."

"Goodness!" said Lorin, "does not every one conspire nowadays? She has done no more, poor girl, than every one else does."

"Grieve for her neither too much, nor too loudly, my friend," said Maurice, "for we have to bear our share in this trouble. Believe me, we are not so fully cleared from the accusation of being her accomplices, that no stain remains behind. To-day, at the section, I was termed 'Girondin,' by the Captain of the Chasseurs of Saint Leu; and I, at the same time, found it necessary to convince him by a stroke from my sword that he was mistaken."

"Then that was the reason you returned so late?"

"Just so."

"But why did you not inform me?"

"Because in affairs of this nature you cannot restrain yourself, and the thing had to be concluded immediately, that it might make no noise."

"And that scum called you 'Girondin,' Maurice, — you, a thoroughbred Republican?"

"By Jove, he did! and this will convince you that another adventure of this nature and we become unpopular; and you well know, Lorin, in these times unpopular is a synonymous term for *suspected*."

"I know it well," said Lorin; "and that word appalls the bravest heart; but never mind — It is repugnant

to my feelings to allow this poor Héloïse to be led to the guillotine without asking her forgiveness."

"What do you wish to do?"

"I wish you to remain here; you have nothing to reproach yourself with, so far as she is concerned. With me, you see, the case is very different. Since I can do nothing for her, I will meet her on her way. I wish to go there, Maurice; do you comprehend me? Were she to give me only a wave of her hand —"

"I will accompany you then," said Maurice.

"Impossible, my friend; you are a municipal, secretary to a section, and you have just been tried, while I have only been your defender. They would think you guilty, therefore remain here. As for me, it is quite another thing. I risk nothing, and therefore go."

"Go then," said he, "but be prudent."

Lorin smiled, shook Maurice's hand, and left.

Maurice opened his window, and waved a sad adieu; but before Lorin had turned the corner of the street, Maurice could not help gazing wistfully at him more than once, and each time, as if drawn by magnetic influence and sympathy, Lorin turned round, looked at him, and smiled.

At last, when the latter had disappeared at the corner of the quay, Maurice closed the window, threw himself into a fauteuil, and fell into one of those dreamy moods which in people of strong mind and vigorous constitution are often the presentiments of misfortune, as they resemble the calm which is the precursor of the storm. He was softly awakened from his revery, or rather state of stupor, by his official, who, on returning from the execution of some commission, entered with the sprightly air of a servant anxious to communicate his budget of news. Seeing his master preoccupied, however, he dared not in-

terrupt him, and consoled himself by constantly passing and re-passing before him, without any reasonable cause for so doing.

"What is it?" at length said Maurice; "speak, if you have anything to tell me."

"Ah! Citizen, another desperate conspiracy."

Maurice merely shrugged his shoulders.

"A conspiracy enough to make the hair of one's head stand upright," continued Agesilaus.

"Indeed!" replied Maurice, like a man accustomed to hear daily of thirty conspiracies at this epoch.

"Yes, Citizen," replied Agesilaus; "it drives me to frenzy, you see. The very thought of it makes a good patriot's flesh creep."

"Let us hear this conspiracy," said Maurice.

"The Austrian has all but escaped."

"Nonsense!" said Maurice, beginning to listen with greater attention.

"It seems," continued Agesilaus, "that the Widow Capet was in communication with the girl Tison, who is to be guillotined to-day. She has not escaped that fate, unfortunate creature!"

"How had the queen communication with this girl?" demanded Maurice, who felt the perspiration exuding at every pore.

"Through a carnation. Can you imagine, Citizen, how they could have conveyed the plan to her in a carnation?"

"In a carnation? Who did this?"

"Monsieur le Chevalier de — wait then! His name is notorious, but as for me, I forget all these names. A Chevalier de Chateau — what a fool I am! It is not a Chateau — a Chevalier de Maison."

"De Maison-Rouge?"

"That is it."

"Impossible!"

"How impossible? when I told you they have found the trap-door, the subterranean passage, and coaches."

"On the contrary, you have told me nothing of all this."

"Well, I am going to tell you, then."

"Go on, then. If it is a story, it is at least a good one."

"No, Citizen, it is not a story, very far from it; and in proof of that, I had it from a citizen porter. The aristocrats had dug a mine, and this mine commenced at Rue de la Corderie, and terminated in the cellar of the little cabin belonging to Madame Plumeau, who has narrowly escaped being arrested as an accomplice. You know her, do you not?"

"Yes," replied Maurice; "go on!"

"Capet's wife was to escape by the subterranean passage. She already had her foot on the first step, when Simon caught her by her robe — But stay, they are beating to arms in the city, and the recall in the sections. Do you not hear the drum? There! It is said that the Prussians are at Dammartin, and have reconnoitred as far as the frontiers."

In the midst of this maze of words, a medley of truth and falsehood, probability and impossibility, Maurice seized the guiding thread. All sprung from the carnation presented before his eyes to the queen, and purchased by himself from the poor miserable flower-girl. This carnation contained the plan of a plot which had just come to light, the details of which, more or less true, had been reported by Agesilaus. At this moment the noise of the drum came nearer, and Maurice heard the crier proclaim in the street, —

"Tremendous conspiracy discovered at the Temple by the Citizen Simon! Grand conspiracy in favor of the Widow Capet discovered at the Temple!"

"Yes, yes," said Maurice; "it is just as I thought. There is some truth in all this. And Lorin, in the midst of this popular excitement, goes to offer his hand to this girl and be cut to pieces."

Maurice snatched up his hat, buckled his sword-belt, and with two bounds was in the street.

"Where can he be?" said Maurice to himself. "Probably on the road to the Conciergerie," and he rushed toward the quay.

At the extreme end of the Quai de la Mégisserie some pikes and bayonets, bristling in the midst of the crowd, attracted his attention, and he fancied in the centre he could distinguish the uniform of a National Guard, and in the group signs of hostile movements. He ran, his heart oppressed with the dread of impending misfortune, toward the assemblage on the banks of the river.

The National Guard pressed by the company of Marseillais was Lorin. He was very pale, his lips compressed, his eyes menacing; his hand upon the handle of his sword, measuring the place best calculated to strike the blows he fully intended to inflict on his cowardly assailants.

Within two feet from Lorin stood Simon. He was laughing ferociously, and pointing him out to the Marseillais and the populace, saying, —

"Look at him! look well at him! He is one of those that I drove from the Temple yesterday for an aristocrat. He is one of those who favored the correspondence with the carnations. This is an accomplice of the girl Tison, who will pass here presently. Well, do you see? — he walks quietly on the quay while his coadjutor goes to

the guillotine; and perhaps she was even more to him than an assistant. She might be his mistress, and he is here to bid her farewell, or to try to save her!"

Lorin was not the man to endure more. He drew his sword. At the same time the crowd opened before a man who charged headlong into the group, whose broad shoulders had already knocked down two or three spectators who were preparing to become actors in this scene.

"Be happy, Simon," said Maurice. "You regretted, no doubt, that I was not with my friend to enable you to turn your new title of Denunciator to full account. Denounce! Simon, denounce! I am here."

"Faith! yes," said Simon, with his hideous sneer; "and your arrival is very apropos. This," continued he, "is the elegant Maurice Lindey, who was accused at the same time as the girl Tison, but was acquitted because he was rich."

"To the lamp-post with them! to the lamp-post!" cried the Marseillais.

"Yes, forsooth, you had better make the attempt!" said Maurice, and advancing a step he pricked one of the foremost of the cut-throats in the forehead, so that the blood from his wound nearly blinded him.

"Have at the murderer!" cried the latter.

The Marseillais lowered their pikes, raised their hatchets, and loaded their guns, while the frightened crowd dispersed, leaving the two friends to contend alone against this storm of blows. They regarded each other with a last sad, yet sublime smile, while calmly awaiting their destruction from the whirlwind of iron and flame which threatened them, when all at once the door of the house against which they were leaning opened, and a swarm of young people, attired in the habits of those termed

"Muscadins," or "Fops," each wearing a sword and brace of pistols in his girdle, rushed upon the Marseillais, and were instantly engaged in a terrific contest.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried Maurice and Lorin, simultaneously, animated by this unexpected relief, without reflecting that to fight in the ranks of the new-comers was to confirm Simon's accusation, — "Hurrah!"

But if they were forgetful of their own safety, another thought for them. A short young man, about five-and twenty years of age, with blue eyes, who fought without any intermission, with infinite science and valor, with a heavy sword which any one would have thought his delicate and feminine hand incapable of wielding, perceiving that Maurice and Lorin, instead of escaping by the door which he seemed to have left open for that purpose, remained fighting by his side, turned to them and said in a low voice, —

"Fly directly through this door; pay no attention to what we do here, or you will uselessly compromise yourselves."

Then, seeing the two friends hesitate, he suddenly cried, addressing himself to Maurice, "Away! no patriots among us, Citizen Lindey; we are aristocrats here!"

At these words, united to the audacity which would induce a man publicly to accuse himself of what at this period must lead to certain death, the crowd uttered a loud shout.

But the fair young man and two or three of his friends, without evincing any symptoms of alarm, pushed Maurice and Lorin into the alley, and closed the door behind them. They then threw themselves into the mêlée, which was now considerably augmented by the approach of the fatal cart.

Maurice and Lorin, thus miraculously saved, regarded each other in amazement. The outlet seemed to have been designed for the express purpose of their escape. They entered a court, and at the end discovered a small private door which opened into Rue Saint Germain l'Auxerrois.

At this moment a detachment of gendarmes issued from Pont au Change, who had soon swept the quay, although, from the cross-street where our two friends had concealed themselves, they heard for an instant the noise of an obstinate struggle. These gendarmes preceded the cart which conducted the hapless Héloïse to the scaffold.

"Gallop!" cried a voice, — "gallop."

The cart proceeded at a quick pace, and Lorin saw the unfortunate girl standing, a smile upon her lips, and calm reliance in her eye, but was unable to exchange even a gesture with her, as she passed without seeing him, in the midst of a perfect maelstrom of people, shouting, —

"To the guillotine with the aristocrat! to the guillotine!"

The noise decreased in the distance till it reached the Tuileries. Then the little door through which Maurice and Lorin had escaped, again opened, and three or four Muscadins, with their clothes torn and stained with blood, passed through. It was probably all that remained of the little troop. The fair young man went through the last.

"Alas!" said he, "this cause is then accursed!" and casting from him his sword, notched and bloody, he rushed toward Rue des Lavandières.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CHEVALIER DE MAISON-ROUGE.

MAURICE hastened to return to the section to enter a complaint against Simon. It is true that before quitting Maurice, Lorin had found a more expeditious way; this was to collect some Thermopyles to lie in wait for him, and on his first exit from the Temple to kill him in a pitched battle. But Maurice strenuously opposed this plan.

"You are ruined," said he, "if you make use of these means. Crush Simon, but do it legally. That ought to be an easy thing enough to the lawyers."

Consequently, the next morning, Maurice laid a formal complaint before the section, but was both astonished and annoyed when the president turned a deaf ear, excusing himself by saying he could not interfere between two good citizens, each incited by the love of country.

"Good," said Maurice. "I know now how to act to merit the reputation of a good citizen. To assemble the people in order to assassinate a man who displeases you: this you call being 'incited by love of country.' Well, I agree to Lorin's opinion, which I was wrong to dispute. After to-day, as you hear, I shall adopt patriotism, and shall first experiment upon Simon."

"Citizen Maurice," replied the president, "you are, after all, perhaps more to blame in this affair than Simon. He discovered a conspiracy, which it was not his province to do. You saw nothing, although the discovery formed

part of your duty; and more, you have held communication — accidentally or intentionally, we know not which — with the enemies of the nation."

"I?" said Maurice. "Well, this is something new. And with whom, pray, Citizen President?"

"With the Citizen Maison-Rouge."

"I?" said Maurice, stupefied. "I had communication with the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge? I do not know him — I never —"

"You have been seen speaking to him."

"I?"

"Shaking his hand."

"I?"

"Yes."

"Where? When, Citizen President?" said Maurice, carried away by the firm conviction of his own innocence. "You have lied!"

"Your zeal for your country carries you too far, Citizen Maurice;" said the president, "and you will regret what you have said, when I tell you I can prove that I have advanced nothing but the truth. Here are three different reports accusing you."

"Now," said Maurice, "do you really think me simple enough to believe in your 'Chevalier de Maison-Rouge'?"

"And why should you not believe it?"

"Because it is only the ghost of a conspirator, with whom you always have a conspiracy ready to amuse your enemies."

"Read the denunciations."

"I will read nothing," said Maurice. "I protest I have never seen the Chevalier, — never spoken to him. Let any one who doubts my word of honor come and tell me so. I shall know how to answer him."

The president shrugged his shoulders. Maurice, who did not wish to be in arrears with any one, did the same. An air of gloomy silence pervaded the remainder of the sitting. After the meeting was concluded, the president, a stanch patriot raised to the highest rank in the district by the votes of his fellow-citizens, approached Maurice, and said, —

"Come, Maurice, I want to speak to you."

Maurice followed the president, who conducted him into a little cabinet adjoining that where the sittings were held. On arriving there, he regarded Maurice for a moment in silence; then placing his hand on his shoulder, —

"Maurice," said he, "I knew and esteemed your father; this makes me esteem and love you. Believe me, you incur great danger from want of faith, — the first falling off of a truly revolutionary spirit. Maurice, my friend, they who lose their faith also lose their fidelity. You do not believe in the enemies of the nation, therefore you pass near without seeing them, and become an instrument in their plots without being aware of it."

"What, the devil!" said Maurice, "I know, Citizen, I am a man of feeling, and possess some share of patriotic zeal; but my zeal does not render me a fanatic. There are twenty pretended conspiracies, to which the public assign the same name. I demand once for all to face my accuser."

"You will not believe in conspirators, Maurice," said the president; "then tell me, do you believe in the red carnation for which Héloïse Tison was yesterday guillotined?"

Maurice started.

"Do you believe in the subterranean passage drilled under the Temple garden communicating through the

cellar of Citizen Plumeau with a certain house in the Rue de la Corderie?"

"No," said Maurice.

"Then do as Thomas the Apostle did, — go and see."

"I am not on guard at the Temple, and they would not allow me to enter."

"Any one may enter the Temple now."

"How is that?"

"Read this report, since you are so incredulous. I shall only proceed by official information."

"Ah!" said Maurice, reading the report, "has it come to this?"

"Continue."

"Are they going to remove Marie Antoinette to the Conciergerie?"

"They are; and do you think that from a dream, or what you call an imaginary idea or an idle story, the Committee of Public Safety would have adopted so grave a measure?"

"This measure has been adopted, but will never be executed, like many more I have seen sanctioned and all —"

"Read to the end," said the president, and he presented him with the last paper.

"The receipt of Richard, the jailer of the Conciergerie!" cried Maurice.

"She has been there these two hours." This time Maurice remained deep in thought.

"The Commune, as you know," continued the president, "acts with profound judgment. It is digging a furrow long and straight in its course; its measures are not puerile, and it has put in execution the principle of Cromwell, — 'Kings should be struck on the head.' Read this secret note from the minister of police."

Maurice read, —

"Seeing that we possess the certainty that the *ci-devant* Chevalier de Maison-Rouge is in Paris; that he has been seen in several places; that he has left traces of his appearance in various plots, happily frustrated, — I request all chiefs of sections to redouble their vigilance — "

"Well?" asked the president.

"I must believe you, Citizen President," said Maurice, and he continued, —

"Description of the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge: In height, five feet three inches; fair hair, blue eyes, straight nose, chestnut-colored beard, dimpled chin, soft voice, and hands like a female's."

At this description a strange light burst upon Maurice; he thought of the young man who commanded the troop of Muscadins, and who on the preceding evening saved the lives of himself and Lorin, and so valiantly drew his sword upon the Marseillais in their defence.

"The deuce!" muttered Maurice, "it must be he; in that case the accusation that I have been seen speaking to him is not false. But I cannot remember taking his hand."

"Maurice," asked the president, "what do you say to all this, now, my friend?"

"That I believe what you have said," said Maurice, musing sadly, who for some time past, without understanding what evil influence saddened his life, had noticed everything darkening around him.

"Do not trifle thus with popularity," said the president. "In these days, Maurice, popularity is life. As for unpopularity, it is to be suspected of treason; and the Citizen Maurice Lindey ought not to brook the suspicion of being a traitor."

Maurice had nothing to reply to sentiments so much in accordance with his own. He thanked his old friend and left the section.

"Ah!" murmured he, "there is too much suspicion and battling. Now," drawing a deep breath, — "now for peace, innocence, and joy; now to Geneviève," and Maurice took the road to the old Rue Saint Jacques.

When he reached the abode of the master-tanner, Dixmer and Morand were supporting Geneviève, who was suffering from a violent attack of hysterics. Thus, instead of being allowed to enter unceremoniously as he was accustomed to do, a servant met him in the passage.

"Announce me, at all events," said he, "and if Dixmer cannot conveniently receive me, I will retire."

The domestic entered the little pavilion, while Maurice remained in the garden. It seemed to him that something strange was going on in the house, and the workmen, instead of being occupied in their usual employment, were pacing restlessly about the garden. At length Dixmer himself appeared.

"Come in, dear Maurice," said he, — "come in; you are not one of those against whom the door is closed."

"What is the matter?" inquired the young man.

"Geneviève is ill," said Dixmer; "indeed, more than ill, — she is delirious."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried the young man, overcome at again encountering trial and suffering; "what, then, is the matter with her?"

"You are aware, my friend," said Dixmer, "one never knows anything concerning the illness of women, especially their husbands."

Geneviève was lying on a lounge; near her stood Morand, offering her some salts, which she smelled occasionally.

"Well?" asked Dixmer.

"Always the same thing," replied Morand.

"Héloïse? Héloïse?" murmured the young woman, from between her closed teeth and white lips.

"Sophie!" repeated Maurice, in much surprise.

"Oh, my God! yes," replied Dixmer, greatly affected; "Geneviève most unfortunately saw the cart pass yesterday conveying the unhappy girl to the scaffold. Since then she has had five or six attacks of hysterics, and keeps on continually calling upon Sophie."

"But the most astonishing thing of all is, that in her she recognized the girl who sold the carnations, which you already know about," said Morand.

"Certainly, I know about them," said Maurice, "since in consequence of them I very narrowly escaped having my head cut off."

"Ah! we have heard all that, dear Maurice, and, believe me, we have not been slightly alarmed; but Morand was at the sitting, and saw you fully acquitted and liberated."

"Silence!" said Maurice; "she again speaks."

"Oh, those empty, unintelligible words!" exclaimed Dixmer.

"Maurice," murmured Geneviève; "they are going to kill Maurice. Rescue him, Chevalier, — rescue him!" A profound silence followed these words.

"Maison-Rouge," again murmured Geneviève; "Maison-Rouge!"

Maurice felt a slight suspicion, but he could make out nothing clearly, and was too much affected by the suffering of Geneviève to attend much to her words.

"Have you called in a physician?" demanded Maurice.

"Oh, it will prove nothing," said Dixmer; "a momentary delirium, that is all," and he shook his wife so

violently by the arm that she revived, and uttering a shrill cry, opened her eyes, which till now had remained closed.

"Ah, you are both here, and Maurice with you. Oh, I am so glad to see you, dear friend; if you knew what I have —" she corrected herself — "what we have suffered for the last two days."

"Yes, we are all here," said Maurice; "have no more terror on that account. But there is one name above all others you must not accustom yourself to pronounce, seeing that at this moment it does not bear a very high repute."

"What name?" quickly demanded Geneviève.

"The Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"Have I named the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?" inquired Geneviève, bewildered.

"Without doubt you have," said Dixmer, with a forced laugh; "but understand, Maurice, there is nothing surprising in that, since it is said he was an accomplice with the girl Tison, and that it was he who concocted the whole plan of escape so happily frustrated yesterday."

"I do not say there is anything surprising in it," said Maurice; "I only say he should keep himself well concealed."

"Who?" demanded Dixmer.

"Zounds! The Chevalier de Maison-Rouge. The Commune seeks for him; and their bloodhounds have a fine scent."

"Provided that, before they arrest him," said Morand, "he has not accomplished some new enterprise that may succeed better than the last."

"At all events," said Maurice, "it will not be in favor of the queen."

"Why not?" demanded Morand.

"Because she is henceforth shielded from his bold attempts."

"Where is she then?" inquired Dixmer.

"At the Conciergerie," replied Maurice; "she was taken there this evening."

Dixmer, Geneviève, and Morand uttered a cry which Maurice mistook for one of surprise.

"Thus you see," continued he, "adieu to the Chevalier's plans for the queen. The Conciergerie is more secure than the Temple."

Morand and Dixmer exchanged looks unperceived by Maurice.

"Ah!" exclaimed Maurice, "Madame Dixmer has turned faint again."

"Geneviève!" said Dixmer, "you must go to bed, my child; you suffer."

Maurice took the hint. He respectfully kissed Geneviève's hand, and quitted the house. Morand left with him, and accompanied him as far as the old Rue Saint Jacques, where he parted with him to exchange some words with a man, a superior sort of domestic, who held a horse ready saddled and bridled. Maurice was so much occupied with his own thoughts that he did not even ask the man's name; indeed, he and Morand had not exchanged a word since they quitted the house together.

Maurice took the road to Rue des Fossés Saint Victor. and gained the quay.

"It is strange," said he, walking on. "Is my mind weakened, or are these events assuming undue importance? Everything appears to me as if viewed through a magnifying glass." And to recover his equanimity, Maurice leaned over the parapet of the bridge and presented his face to the breeze.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PATROL.

As he lost himself in these reflections, and leaning over the parapet of the bridge, enjoyed a melancholy pleasure in gazing on the dark still water, he heard the measured tread of a little troop, like that of a patrol. Maurice turned round; it was a company of the National Guard, arrived by the other extremity, and in the obscurity he fancied he recognized Lorin. It was he, indeed. The instant he saw his friend Maurice he ran toward him with open arms.

"Found at last," cried Lorin. "Faith, it is not without some trouble that we have rejoined you.

"'But since I find a friend so fond,
My fate assumes an aspect new.'

This time you will not complain, I hope, for I have given you Racine instead of Lorin."

"But what do you do here as patrol?" inquired Maurice, anxiously.

"I am the chief of the expedition, old fellow; the business is to establish our blemished reputation upon its original footing." Then turning toward his company, "Carry arms! Present arms! Shoulder arms!"

"There, my lads, it is not yet sufficiently dark, so you can talk over your little affairs while we follow your example." Then turning to Maurice, "I have heard great news at the section to-day," continued Lorin.

"What!"

"First, that you and I are beginning to be suspected."

"I know it. What next?"

"Secondly, that the whole conspiracy of the carnations was conducted by the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"I know that also."

"But this you do not know, — that the conspiracy of the carnations and that of the subterranean passage are one and the same."

"Again, I know it."

"Then let us pass on to the third piece of news. This I am certain you cannot know. We go this night to capture the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"To take the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?"

"Yes."

"Have you then turned gendarme?"

"No; but I am a patriot. A patriot belongs to his country. Now my country is horribly ravaged by this Chevalier, who forms plot upon plot. Well, my country commands me, being a patriot, to free her from this Chevalier de Maison-Rouge, who distresses her horribly, and I obey my country."

"It is all the same," said Maurice; "but it is singular that you should be charged with this commission."

"I am not charged; I charge myself, or rather, I should say, I solicited the commission. It required a brilliant stroke to reinstate us in our former position; while our re-establishment will not only prove security for our lives, but still more the right of putting, at the very first opportunity offered, six inches of steel into the belly of that hideous Simon."

"But how are they sure it was the Chevalier who was the instigator of this subterranean plot?"

"They are not yet certain, but they presume so."

"You proceed, then, upon inference?"

"No; we proceed by certainty."

"How do you make out all this?"

"Listen."

"I am listening."

"I had scarcely heard the cry 'Grand conspiracy discovered by the Citizen Simon,' — that beast Simon (the wretch is everywhere), — than I wished to judge of the truth for myself. Then, they spoke of a subterranean passage."

"Does it really exist?"

"It does; I have seen it;

"'Seen it with both my eyes; that I call seeing, —'

There, why do you not hiss?"

"Because that is Molière; and besides, these events, I must confess, appear to me rather too serious for pleasantry."

"What can we jest about, if we do not jest about serious things?"

"You say, then, that you have seen it?"

"I repeat that I have seen the subterranean passage. It extends from the cellar of the Widow Plumeau to a house in the Rue de la Corderie, No. 12 or 14, I cannot remember which."

"Really? Have you passed through it, Lorin?"

"I have, the whole length; and, faith, it is a trench prettily cut, I assure you; and moreover it was divided by three iron gratings, which they have been obliged to remove one after the other, but which, in case these conspirators had succeeded, would have given them time, by sacrificing two or three of their number, to have placed Madame Widow Capet in a place of safety. Happily it is not so, and that hideous Simon discovered all!"

"But it appears to me," said Maurice, "those who ought to have been first arrested were the inhabitants of the house in the Rue de la Corderie."

"This would have been, had they not found the house perfectly uninhabited."

"But at least this house must belong to some one?"

"Yes, to a new proprietor; but no one knows who. They know the house changed masters two weeks since, and that is all. The neighbors have often heard a noise; but the house being very old, they had imagined it was undergoing thorough repair. As to the late proprietor, he has left Paris. In the mean time I arrived."

"'Upon my word!' said I to Santerre, drawing him aside, 'you are in an awkward situation.'

"'Indeed we are,' replied he.

"'This house has been sold, has it not?'

"'Yes, it was, about a fortnight ago.'

"'Was it sold in the presence of a notary?'

"'Yes.'

"'Then we must search all the notaries in Paris, to discover which of them sold this house, and then make him produce the agreement, at the bottom of which will be found the name of the purchaser.'

"'Well and good!' said Santerre, 'that is capital advice, and coming too from a man they accuse of not being a good patriot. Lorin! Lorin! I will re-establish you, or may the foul fiend seize me!'

"To be brief," continued Lorin, "this was no sooner said than done. The notary was sought for, the act was found, and upon the agreement the name and domicile of the culprit were written. Then Santerre took me aside, and I have engaged to arrest him."

"Was this man the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?"

"No, only his accomplice, — that is to say, in all probability he was so."

"Then how is it you say you are going to arrest the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?"

"We are going to arrest them all together."

"Do you, then, know this Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?"

"Perfectly."

"Have you seen the description of him?"

"By thunder! Santerre gave it to me. Five feet two or three inches, fair hair, blue eyes, straight nose, etc.; besides, I have seen him."

"When?"

"This very day."

"You have seen him?"

"And so have you."

Maurice started.

"The short, fair young man who rescued us this morning, — he who commanded the troop of Muscadins, and struck so hard."

"Was that the Chevalier?" demanded Maurice.

"Himself. They followed and lost him in the environs of the domicile of our proprietor of the Rue de la Corderie, so that we surmise they live together."

"It seems probable."

"It is certain."

"But it seems to me, Lorin," added Maurice, "that if this evening you arrest him who rescued you this very morning, you are much wanting in gratitude."

"Go along, then," said Lorin; "why, you don't suppose he saved us for our own sakes, do you?"

"For what else, then?"

"Not at all; they were in ambush to carry off the poor girl, Héloïse Tison, as she passed to the scaffold. Our cut-throats embarrassed them, so they fell upon the

cut-throats; that was the whole of it. We have been saved by a *contre-coup*. Now, as the intention is everything, and there was no intention, I have nothing to accuse myself with on the score of ingratitude. Besides, do you see, Maurice, the capital point is necessity; and the necessity is that we should reinstate ourselves by some brilliant achievement. And then I have promised for you."

"To whom?"

"To Santerre; he knows that you command this expedition."

"How can that be?"

"'Are you sure of arresting these criminals?' said he to me.

"'Yes,' I replied; 'if Maurice is with me.'

"'But are you sure of Maurice? For some time he has been looked upon as rather lukewarm.'

"'Those who say so are totally deceived. Maurice is no more lukewarm in the cause than I am myself.'

"'And you will answer for his fidelity?'

"'As for my own.' I then went to your house, but could not find you at home. I took this road first because it lay in my way, and then I remembered it was the one you usually frequented; so at last we have met. Forward! March!

"'Where Victory leads us still onward we go,
Ever joyfully singing we 'll face every foe.'"

"My dear Lorin, I am in despair. I do not feel the slightest taste for this expedition. Say that you were not able to find me."

"Impossible! all our men have seen you."

"Well, then, say you met me, and I was not willing to join you."

"Again impossible."

"But why so?"

"Because this time you will not only be considered lukewarm, but a *suspect;* and you well know the fate of *these suspects.* They are conducted to the Place de la Revolution, and are there invited to salute the statue of Liberty; only instead of saluting with the hat they substitute the head."

"Well, Lorin, I hardly care how soon this fate may befall me; but without doubt it seems strange to you to hear me say so."

Lorin opened his eyes wide, and looked at Maurice.

"Well," said Maurice, "I am weary of life."

Lorin burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ah! ah!" said he, "we have had a quarrel with our beloved, and that fills us with melancholy ideas. Come, my handsome Amadis! let us return to the man, and from that we shall pass to the citizen. As for me I am never a better patriot than when I am embroiled with Arthémise. Apropos, her Divinity the Goddess Reason charged me with a thousand gracious messages for you."

"Pray thank her for me. Adieu, Lorin."

"Adieu! how adieu?"

"Yes, I am going."

"Where are you going?"

"I am going home."

"Maurice, you will ruin yourself."

"I laugh at the idea."

"Maurice, reflect; my friend, reflect!"

"I have done so."

"I have not repeated all —"

"What?"

"That Santerre said to me."

"What did he say?"

"When I asked for you to be chief of this expedition, he said to me, 'Take care!'"

"'Of whom?'

"'Of Maurice.'"

"Of me?"

"Yes, Maurice; and he also added, 'he often goes into that quarter?'"

"Into what quarter?"

"Into that of Maison-Rouge."

"How?" cried Maurice, "is it here he hides himself?"

"They fancy so, since it is here his supposed accomplice resides, the purchaser of the house in the Rue de la Corderie."

"Faubourg Victor?" demanded Maurice.

"Yes; Faubourg Victor."

"And in what street?"—

"In the old Rue Saint Jacques."

"O God!" murmured Maurice, as if struck by a thunderbolt. And he pressed his hand before his eyes. But after a moment's interval, during which he had collected all his courage, —

"What trade?" said he.

"A master-tanner."

"His name?"

"Dixmer."

"You are right, Lorin," said Maurice, by a violent effort controlling his emotion; "I will go with you."

"And you do well; are you armed?"

"I always carry my sword."

"Take also this pair of pistols."

"And you?"

"I have my gun. Carry arms! Shoulder arms! Forward! March!"

The patrol commenced its march, accompanied by

Maurice, who walked near Lorin. They were preceded by a man dressed in gray, who directed their movements. This was an agent of police.

From time to time a shadow might be seen emerging from the angles of the streets or the doors of the houses, who exchanged some words with the man in gray. This was the inspector. On arriving at the little street, the man in gray did not hesitate for an instant. He was well instructed, and entered the street at once. Before the door of the garden where Maurice had been so nearly garroted, he stopped.

"It is here," said he.

"What is here?" demanded Lorin.

"It is here we shall find the two principals."

Maurice supported himself against the wall; he felt as if he were sinking to the ground.

"Now," said the man in gray, "there are three entrances, — the principal entrance, this one, and another which leads into a pavilion. I shall enter with six or eight men through the principal entrance, in the mean time keep guard here with four or five men, and place three sure men at the entrance of the pavilion."

"I will get over the wall," said Maurice, "and watch in the garden."

"The very thing," said Lorin, "as from the interior you can open the door to us."

"Willingly," said Maurice, "but do not clear the passage, or come, till I call you. All that passes in the interior I shall see from the garden."

"You are acquainted with the house, then?" demanded Lorin.

"Some time back I wished to buy it."

Lorin proceeded to conceal his men in the corners of the hedges and angles of the doors, while the agent of

police retired with six or eight National Guards to force his way by the principal entrance. In an instant the noise of their receding steps ceased in the distance, without having awakened the least suspicion. Maurice's men were at their post, and did their best to keep concealed. One would have declared that everything was perfectly quiet, and that nothing extraordinary was passing in the old Rue Saint Jacques. Maurice then began to climb the wall.

"Listen," said Lorin.

"To what?"

"The countersign."

"Right."

"'Carnation and Vault.' Stop all those who cannot give these three words. Permit all to pass who can. This is the password."

"Thanks," said Maurice, dropping from the top of the wall into the garden.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE PASSWORD.

THE first blow was terrible. It indeed required all Maurice's self-command to enable him to conceal from Lorin how powerfully he was affected by these startling events; but once in the garden, once alone in the silence of night, his mind became more calm, and his ideas, instead of running disordered through his brain, became once more under the control of reason.

What! this house that Maurice had so often visited with the purest pleasure; this house which had formed for him a paradise on earth, — was in reality only a den of sanguinary intrigues. The kind and flattering receptions bestowed on his ardent friendship resulted then from sheer hypocrisy; the love of Geneviève from fear.

The plan of the garden is well-known, our readers having more than once followed our young folks there. Maurice glided from bush to bush till he was shaded from the moon's rays by the little conservatory where he had been imprisoned previous to his first introduction to the house This conservatory was opposite the pavilion inhabited by Geneviève. But this evening, instead of gleaming stationary from her chamber, the light moved frequently from one window to another. Maurice saw Geneviève through the curtain, evidently raised by accident, hastily packing some things in a portmanteau, and with astonishment beheld some weapons in her hands. He raised himself upon a post to enable him to see

farther into the room. A large fire was blazing on the hearth, where Geneviève was destroying papers.

At this moment the door opened and a young man entered the room. At first Maurice imagined this man was Dixmer. The young woman ran toward him, seized his hands, and they both stood facing each other for a moment, evidently influenced by some deep emotion. What this emotion meant he could not divine, as their words did not reach his hiding-place. But all at once Maurice measured his height with his eye.

"This is not Dixmer," murmured he. Indeed, the man who had entered was small and delicate, while Dixmer was tall and masculine. Jealousy is an active stimulant, and in a second he had compared the figure of this man with that of her husband.

"This is not Dixmer!" murmured he, compelled as it were to repeat it, to convince himself of the perfidy of Geneviève.

He approached still nearer to the window, but the nearer he came the less he saw. His brain was on fire. He stumbled on a ladder; the window was seven or eight feet high. He seized the ladder, and planting it firmly against the wall, ascended and placed his eye at an aperture in the curtain.

Geneviève's unknown visitor was a fair young man, about twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age, with blue eyes, and an elegant demeanor; he retained both the young woman's hands within his own, and was speaking soothingly, endeavoring fruitlessly to assuage the grief of Geneviève, which was plainly evinced by the tears which suffused her charming countenance. A slight noise, accidentally made by Maurice, caused the young man to turn his face toward the window. Maurice suppressed a cry of astonishment, he recognized his mys-

terious deliverer of the Place du Chatelet. At this moment Geneviève withdrew her hands from those of the unknown, and went toward the fireplace to ascertain that the papers were utterly consumed.

Maurice could no longer command his indignation. All those fierce passions which torture the heart of man — love, vengeance, and jealousy — lacerated him with their fangs of fire. He at once threw open the ill-closed casement, and vaulted into the chamber. At the same moment two pistols were pressed to his breast.

Geneviève, who had turned round at the noise, on perceiving Maurice stood speechless.

"Sir," said the young Republican, coldly, to him who had a double hold on his life, "you are the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"And what if I am?" replied the Chevalier.

"It is this: you are a brave man, and consequently a cool one, and I would say two words to you."

"Say on," said the Chevalier, without lowering his pistols.

"You can kill me; but you cannot do so before I have uttered a cry, or rather I will not die without giving an alarm. Should I do so, the thousand men who surround this house will have reduced it to ashes ere the lapse of ten minutes; so lower your pistols and listen to what I have to say to the lady."

"To Geneviève?" said the Chevalier.

"To me?" murmured the young woman.

"Yes, to you."

Geneviève, pale as a statue, seized Maurice's arm; but he repulsed her coldly.

"You know what you affirmed, Madame," said Maurice, with profound contempt. "I now see that you told the truth. You indeed do not love Monsieur Morand."

"Maurice! hear me," said Geneviève.

"I have nothing to hear, Madame; you have severed with a single stroke every cord that united my heart with your own. You told me you did not love Morand, but you did not tell me you loved another."

"Sir," said the Chevalier, "what say you of Morand, or rather of what Morand do you speak?"

"Of Morand the chemist."

"Morand the chemist stands before you. Morand the chemist is the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

And extending his hand toward the table, he in an instant resumed the black wig which for so long a period had concealed him from the young Republican.

"Ah, yes," said he, with redoubled disdain, — "yes, I understand. It is not Morand that you love, since Morand does not exist; but the subterfuge, for all its acuteness, is none the less contemptible."

The Chevalier made a threatening movement.

"Sir," said Maurice, "permit me to speak a moment with the lady; join in the conversation if you like; it will not be long, I assure you."

Geneviève, with a gesture, asked Maison-Rouge to have patience.

"Thus, Geneviève, thus," continued Maurice, "you have made me a laughing-stock to my friends and a curse to my party. You have rendered me, blind fool that I was, an instrument in all your plots and an easy tool in your hands. Listen! It was an infamous deed; but you will be punished, Madame, for in five minutes this man, who is going to kill me before your eyes, will be lying dead at your feet; or if his life be spared, it will only be to lose his head upon the scaffold."

"He die!" cried Geneviève; "he lose his head upon the scaffold! But you do not know then, Maurice, that

he is my protector, and that of my family; that I will give my life for his; that if he dies I will die; and that if you are my love, he is my religion!"

"Ah!" said Maurice, "perhaps you still mean to pretend that you love me. Really, women are sadly weak and contemptible."

Then turning to the young Royalist, —

"Now, sir," said he, "you must either kill me or die yourself."

"Why so?"

"Because, if you do not kill me, I shall arrest you."

Maurice extended his hand to seize him by the collar.

"I shall not dispute my life with you," said the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge; and he flung his pistols on a chair.

"And why do you not dispute your life?"

"Because my life is not equivalent in value to the remorse I should experience in feeling that I had killed a brave man, and more than all since Geneviève loves you."

"Ah!" cried the young woman, clasping her hands, "you are always kind, great, loyal, and generous, Armand!"

Maurice regarded them both, almost stupefied with astonishment.

"One moment," said the Chevalier, "allow me to return to my chamber. I give you my word of honor it is not to escape; I wish to conceal a portrait."

Maurice turned his eyes quickly toward that of Geneviève; it hung in its place. Perhaps the Chevalier divined Maurice's thoughts, or perhaps he wished to try his generosity to the utmost.

"Come," said he, "I know you are a Republican, but I know also that you possess a pure and loyal heart. I will trust you to the end. Look!"

And he drew a miniature from his breast, and displayed

it to Maurice. He beheld before him the portrait of the queen. Maurice bowed his head, and rested his forehead on his hand.

"I await your orders, sir," said Maison-Rouge; "if you desire my arrest, knock at this door when it is time for me to give myself up. I care not for my life from the moment it is not sustained by the hope of saving my queen."

The Chevalier quitted the room without a gesture from Maurice offering to detain him.

As he left the chamber Geneviève cast herself at the young man's feet.

"Pardon, Maurice," sobbed she, — "pardon for all the evil I have done. Forgive my deception; forgive me, if only on account of my tears and suffering, for believe me I have wept much and suffered much. My husband left me this morning; I know not where he is gone, and perhaps I may see him no more. And now I have only one friend left, — nay more than friend, a brother, — and you will destroy him. Pardon, Maurice, pardon!"

Maurice raised the young woman.

"What would you?" said he. "There is fatality in all this. Every one stakes his life in these days; the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge has played like all the rest, but he has lost the game, and he must therefore pay."

"That means that he must die, if I understand you rightly?"

"Yes."

"He must die; and it is you who tell me this?"

"It is not I, Geneviève; it is fatality."

"Fatality has not uttered its last word, since you can save him."

"At the expense of my word, and consequently of my honor. I comprehend, Geneviève."

"Shut your eyes, Maurice; that is all I ask; and as far as a woman may evince her gratitude I will promise you mine."

"I should close my eyes to little purpose, Madame; there is a password given, and without this password no one could go out. Besides, the house, as I have told you, is surrounded."

"And you know the word?"

"Certainly I know it."

"Maurice!"

"Well?"

"Dear friend Maurice, tell me this password; I must know it."

"Geneviève," cried Maurice, "do you mean to say to me, 'Maurice, for the love I bear you, sacrifice your word and your honor, betray your cause, abjure your opinions.' What do you offer me, Geneviève, in exchange for all this, you who tempt me thus?"

"Oh, Maurice, save him, save him first! and then ask of me my life."

"Geneviève," replied Maurice, in a desponding tone, "hear me! I have one foot on the road to infamy; before I make a final descent I wish at least to find a sufficient excuse for so doing. Geneviève, swear to me you do not love the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge!"

"I love him as a sister and a friend; not otherwise, I swear."

"Geneviève, do you love me?"

"Maurice, I do love you; it is true, as God now hears me."

"If I do what you ask me, will you abandon relatives, friends, country, and fly with the traitor?"

"Maurice! Maurice!"

"She hesitates! Oh, she hesitates!"

And he turned from her with all the violence of disdain. Geneviève, who was leaning upon him, feeling suddenly her support give way, fell upon her knees.

"Maurice," said she, wringing her hands, "I will swear to do all that you require of me. Order, and I will obey."

"You will be mine, Geneviève?"

"I will."

"Swear it, by Christ."

Geneviève extended her arms.

"My God," cried she, "thou didst pardon one poor woman who had gone astray; I trust in thy mercy that thou wilt also pardon me."

And the great tears rained down her cheeks, falling upon her long hair hanging dishevelled on her bosom.

"Not thus!" said Maurice, "swear not thus! or I cannot accept that oath."

"O Heaven!" replied she, "I swear to devote my life to Maurice, to die with him, and if requisite, for him, if he will save my friend, my brother, my protector, the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"'T is well: he shall be saved," said Maurice.

And he went toward his chamber.

"Sir," said he, "resume your costume of the tanner Morand; I return your parole, you are free. And you, Madame," said he turning to Geneviève, "this is the password, 'Carnation and Vault.'" And as if horrified to remain in the chamber where he had pronounced the words which constituted him a traitor, he opened the window, and sprang from the room into the garden below.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SEARCH.

MAURICE had returned to his post in the garden, opposite the window of Geneviève, only it was now quite dark, she having left her apartment to enter that of the Chevalier.

It was time Maurice returned, for scarcely had he reached the corner of the conservatory when the garden-door opened, and the man in gray appeared, followed by Lorin, and five or six gendarmes.

"Well?" asked Lorin.

"You see I am at my post," said Maurice.

"And no one has attempted to force past you?" said Lorin.

"No one," replied Maurice, happy to escape by an evasion, from the way in which the question was put to him. "No one. And what have you done?"

"Why, we have acquired the certainty that the Chevalier entered the house an hour ago, and has not left it since," replied the agent of police.

"Do you know his chamber?" said Lorin.

"His room is only separated from that of Madame Dixmer by a corridor."

"Ah! ah!" said Lorin. "It appears this Chevalier de Maison-Rouge is a gallant."

Maurice felt the hot blood rush to his forehead; he closed his eyes, yet saw a thousand internal lights.

"Well, but Citizen Dixmer, what said he to that?" asked Lorin.

"Why, he thought himself highly honored."

"Come," said Maurice, in a choking voice; "upon what do we decide?"

"We have decided," said the police agent, "to arrest him in his chamber, perhaps in his bed."

"He does not, then, suspect anything?"

"Absolutely nothing?"

"What is the ground plan?" inquired Lorin.

"We have an exact plan," said the man in gray. "A pavilion situated at a corner of the garden, there it is; you ascend four steps — do you see them here? — and find yourself on a landing; to the right is the apartment of Madame Dixmer, — no doubt it is that of which we see the window. Facing this window, at the back part, is a door opening on the corridor, and in this corridor the entrance to the chamber of the traitor."

"Well, with so careful a specimen of topography," said Lorin, "we might, I think, easily find our way blindfold, much more with our eyes open. Come on!"

"Are the streets well guarded?" said Maurice, with an interest which the assistants very naturally attributed to his fear lest the Chevalier should escape.

"The streets, the passages, even the crossings," said the man in gray. "I defy any one to pass who has not the watchword."

Maurice shuddered; all these precautions being taken, made him fear that he had uselessly parted with his honor to add to his happiness.

"Now," said the man in gray, "how many men do you require to secure the Chevalier?"

"How many men?" said Lorin. "I hope Maurice and I are sufficient for that. Are we not, Maurice?"

"Yes," murmured the municipal, "we are certainly sufficient."

"Listen!" said the police agent; "no vain boasting. Do you mean to take him?"

"Zounds! Do we mean it?" said Lorin; "I should think so! We are bound to take him, are we not, Maurice?" Lorin laid a stress upon these words, for as he had truly said, suspicion began to settle upon them; and it was not wise to allow time for suspicion, which marched with such rapid strides at this epoch, to assume a firmer consistence, for Lorin well knew that no one would presume to doubt the stanch patriotism of any two men who had captured the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge.

"Well, then," said the police agent, "if you are in earnest, better take three men than two, and four than three, with you. The Chevalier invariably sleeps with pistols under his pillow, and his sword on a table by his side."

"Deuce take it!" said one of the gendarmes of Lorin's company. "Let us go in, without standing on ceremony who should enter first. If he resists, we will cut him to pieces; if he surrender, we will reserve him for the guillotine."

"Well said!" exclaimed Lorin; "do we go in by the door or the window?"

"By the door," said the agent of police; "it may be the key is in the lock, while if we enter by the window we must break some panes, and that would make a noise."

"On for the door, then!" said Lorin; "as long as we enter, it little matters how. Forward! sword in hand, Maurice."

Maurice mechanically drew his sword from the scabbard, and the little troop advanced toward the pavilion. The information of the man in gray proved perfectly correct; they first found the steps, then the landing, and at last entered the vestibule.

"Ah!" cried Lorin, joyfully, "the key is in the door." In short, extending his hand in the dark, his fingers had encountered the cold key.

"Then open it, Citizen Lieutenant," said the man in gray.

Lorin cautiously turned the key in the lock. The door opened. Maurice wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"We shall find him here," said Lorin.

"Not yet," said the man in gray; "if our chart is correct, this is the apartment of Citizeness Dixmer."

"We can soon ascertain that," said Lorin; "light a wax candle; there is some fire in the grate."

"Light the torches," said the man in gray, "they are not so soon extinguished as candles," at the same time taking two torches from the hand of a gendarme, which he lighted by the dying embers. He placed one in the hand of Maurice, the other in that of Lorin. "You see," said he, "I was not deceived; here is the door opening into Citizeness Dixmer's sleeping apartment, and here the one opening into the corridor."

"On, for the corridor!" said Lorin. They opened the door at the farther end, which was not more firmly secured than the first, and found themselves fronting the door of the Chevalier's chamber. Maurice had seen this door twenty times before, and never thought of inquiring where it led to. All his world was centred in the room where he was received by Geneviève.

"Oh! oh!" said Lorin, in a low voice, "here we must change our tactics; no more keys, and the door locked."

"Are you," asked Maurice, hardly able to articulate, "sure that he is here?"

"If our plan is correct, he ought to be here," replied the police agent; "besides, we shall soon see. Gendarmes,

force open the door; and you, citizens, hold yourselves in readiness, and the instant the door is opened, dash into the chamber!"

Four men, selected by the emissary of police, raised the butt-ends of their muskets, and on a signal from the man who conducted this enterprise, gave one blow all together, when the door flew into a thousand fragments.

"Surrender, or you are a dead man!" cried Lorin, rushing into the chamber.

No one replied, and the curtains of the bed were closely drawn.

"Mind the bed!" said the emissary of police; "at the first movement of the curtains, fire!"

"Wait!" said Maurice, "I will open them."

And no doubt in the hope that the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge might be concealed behind them, and that it would be his lot to meet the first stab or pistol shot, Maurice hastily pulled apart the curtains, which, creaking along the iron rod, left the tenantless bed exposed to view.

"The devil!" exclaimed Lorin, "there is no one here."

"He must have escaped," murmured Maurice.

"Impossible, citizens, impossible!" cried the man in gray. "I tell you he was seen to enter here an hour ago, and no one has been seen to go out, and all the outlets from the garden are well guarded.

Lorin opened the cabinets, the wardrobes, and looked everywhere, even where it was physically impossible that a man could be concealed.

"You see, however, that no one is here."

"No one!" repeated Maurice, with an emotion easily understood, — "you see no one is here."

"To the chamber of Madame Dixmer," said the police agent, "perhaps he may be there?"

"Oh!" said Maurice, "respect the chamber of a woman."

"Certainly we will respect it," said Lorin, "and Madame Dixmer also, but for all that we must visit it."

"Then," said Maurice, "permit me to pass first."

"Pass on, then," said Lorin, "you are captain: honor the powers that be," and leaving two men to guard the apartment, they returned to that where they had lighted the torches. Maurice approached the door opening into the chamber of Geneviève. It was the first time he had ever entered there. His heart beat violently. The key was in the door. Maurice laid his hand upon the key, but still hesitated.

"Well," said Lorin, "open!"

"But," said Maurice, "if Madame Dixmer should be in bed?"

"We shall look in her bed, under her bed, in the chimney, in the wardrobes, and then if we find no one there but herself, we shall wish her good-night," said Lorin.

"No, not so," said the police agent; "we shall arrest her; Citizeness Geneviève Dixmer is an aristocrat who has been recognized as an accomplice of the girl Tison and the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

"Open it yourself, then," said Maurice, "I do not arrest women." The agent of police looked at Maurice, sideways, and the men murmured among themselves.

"Oh, you grumble, do you?" said Lorin; "then you shall have two to grumble about. I am of Maurice's opinion," and he made a step backward.

The man in gray seized the key, opened the door, and the soldiers rushed into the chamber. Two wax lights burned upon a little table, but the chamber of Geneviève, like that of the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge, was uninhabited.

"Empty!" cried the police agent.

"Empty!" cried Maurice, turning pale; "where is she, then?"

Lorin regarded Maurice with astonishment.

"Let us search," said the agent of police, and closely followed by the military, he began to rummage the house from the cellars to the workshops. At length, when their backs were turned, Maurice, who had followed them impatiently with his eyes, in his turn darted into the chamber, opening the presses, which had already been opened, and calling in a voice replete with anxiety, "Geneviève! Geneviève!" But Geneviève made no reply; the chamber was indeed vacated. Then he began to search the house in a species of frenzy, outhouses, conservatories, sheds, — nothing was omitted, but all without success.

Suddenly a noise was heard, a troop of armed men presented themselves at the door, exchanged the password with the sentinel, entered the garden, and dispersed themselves over the house. At the head of this reinforcement waved the red plume of Santerre.

"Well!" said he to Lorin, "where is the conspirator?"

"How! where is the conspirator?"

"Yes! I asked what have you done with him?"

"I shall ask you that question. If your detachment had guarded the outlets properly, ere this he must have been arrested, since he was not in the house when we entered it."

"What! do you mean to say," cried the furious general, "that you have really allowed the Chevalier to escape?"

"We could not allow him to escape since we have never taken him."

"Then I can comprehend nothing," said Santerre.

"Of what?" said Lorin.

"Of the message you sent me by your envoy."

"We sent you an envoy!"

"Yes; a man in a brown coat, with black hair, and green spectacles, who came from you to inform me you were on the eve of capturing Maison-Rouge, but that he was defending himself like a lion; upon hearing which I hastened to your assistance."

"A man in a brown coat, black hair, and green spectacles?" repeated Lorin.

"Yes, with a female on his arm."

"Young and pretty?" cried Maurice, glancing toward the general.

"Yes, young and pretty."

"It was he and Madame Dixmer," said Maurice.

"What, he!" exclaimed Santerre. "Maison-Rouge! Oh, blockhead that I was not to have killed them both! Come, Citizen Lindey, we may capture them yet."

"But how the devil," asked Lorin, "came you to let them pass?"

"Zounds!" said Santerre, "I let them pass because they gave the password."

"They had the password?" exclaimed Lorin; "then there is surely a traitor among us!"

"No, no, Citizen Lorin; you are known, and we well know that there are no traitors among you."

Lorin looked around him as if to detect the miscreant, and publicly proclaim his shame. He encountered the gloomy face and wandering eye of Maurice.

"Ah!" murmured he, "what means this?"

"The man cannot be very far off," said Santerre; "let us search the environs; perhaps he has fallen in with some patrol who, more wide awake than we, did not allow themselves to be gulled so easily."

"Yes, yes; let us search," said Lorin; and, under

the pretence of so doing, he seized Maurice by the arm, and drew him into the garden.

"Yes, let us search," said the soldiers; "but before we search —" and one of them flung his still burning torch into an adjacent shed, filled with bundles of fagots and dried herbs.

"Come," said Lorin, "come!"

Maurice offered no resistance. He followed Lorin like a child; they both ran as far as the bridge without speaking; there they stopped, and Maurice turned round. The sky was red from the horizon to the Faubourg, and above the houses ascended innumerable sparks.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FIRE.

MAURICE shuddered as he extended his hand toward the Rue Saint Jacques.

"The fire!" said he, — "the fire!"

"Yes," said Lorin, "the fire; what then?"

"Gracious Heavens! if she has returned."

"Who?"

"Geneviève."

"Geneviève means Madame Dixmer, does it not?"

"Yes."

"There is no danger of her return; she did not go away for that purpose."

"Lorin, I must find her. I will have my revenge."

"Oh, oh!" said Lorin.

> "None can escape thy puissant sceptre, Love.
> Thou reign'st on earth and in the heavens above."

"You will assist me in my search, will you not, Lorin?"

"Zounds! there will be no difficulty in that."

"Why so?"

"Without doubt, if you are so much interested, as to me you appear to be, in Madame Dixmer's fate, you, being intimate with her, ought, knowing her, also to know her friends. She has not quitted Paris; her friends have every motive to stay; she has taken refuge in the house of some confidential acquaintance, and to-morrow morn-

ing you will receive a billet by some 'Rose,' or some 'Marton,' couched as follows, —

> "Wouldst see again, my Mars, thy Venus true?
> Borrow of Night her scarf of azure hue.

And requesting you to present yourself at the porter's lodge, such a number, such a street, and to inquire for Madame Three-stars ; that is all."

Maurice shrugged his shoulders ; he well knew there was no one with whom Geneviève could take refuge.

"We shall not find her," said he.

"Will you permit me to say one thing, Maurice?"

"What?"

"That it will be no great misfortune if we should not find her."

"If we do not, Lorin, I shall die."

"The devil!" exclaimed the young man ; "it was, then, of this love that you lately so nearly died."

"Yes," replied Maurice.

Lorin reflected an instant. "Maurice," said he, "it is now nearly eleven o'clock ; this quarter is deserted ; here is a stone seat, particularly adapted for the reception of two friends. Accord me the favor of a private interview, as they used to say, under the ancient régime. I give you my word of honor that I shall speak only in prose."

They seated themselves upon the bench.

"Speak!" said Maurice, resting his aching head upon his hand.

"Without exordium, periphrasis, or commentary, I tell you one thing, old fellow, — it is this, that we are ruining ourselves, or rather that you are ruining us."

"How so?" demanded Maurice.

"There is, my friend, a decree issued by the Com-

mittee of Public Safety, which declares every man a traitor to his country who enters into any relationship with the acknowledged enemies of the said country. Eh! do you know this decree?"

"To be sure I do," replied Maurice.

"Well, it seems to me, you are not a vile traitor to your country. What say you? as Manlius says."

"Lorin!"

"Undoubtedly; unless you believe that those idolize their country who give house-room, bed, and board to Monsieur le Chevalier de Maison-Rouge, who is not a high Republican, as I suppose, and has not been accused at any time of having taken part in the days of September."

"Ah! Lorin," said Maurice, sighing heavily.

"Still, it appears to me," continued the moralist, "that you have been, and still are, too intimate with the enemies of your country. Come! Come, friend Maurice, do not rebel! you are like the whilom Enceladus; you move a mountain each time you turn yourself."

Lorin pronounced these words in the kindest manner possible, and glossed them over with an artifice truly Ciceronian.

Maurice merely made a gesture of dissent, but the gesture was unheeded, and Lorin continued, —

"If we exist in a green-house temperature, a healthy atmosphere, where, according to botanic rules, the barometer invariably points to sixteen degrees, I should say, my dear Maurice, that this is elegant, satisfactory; what though we are occasionally rather aristocratic, we flourish and do well. But if scorched in a heat of thirty-five or forty degrees, the sap burns, so that it rises slowly, and from the excess of heat seems cold; when cold, then comes the blight of suspicion, — you know this, Maurice, — and once suspected, you possess too much good sense

not to know what we shall be, or rather that ere long we shall be no more."

"Well, then," said Maurice, "they can kill me, and there will be an end of me, for I am weary of my life."

"For the last quarter of an hour," said Lorin; "indeed scarcely so long that I should leave you to act according to your own pleasure on this subject; and then to die now, it is necessary to die a Republican while you would die an aristocrat."

"Ah!" said Maurice, whose blood began to boil from impassioned grief, resulting from the consciousness of his own criminality, "you go too far, friend Lorin."

"I shall go farther still, and forewarn you, that if you turn aristocrat — "

"You will denounce me?"

"For shame! No. I will confine you in a cellar, and have you sought after to the sound of the drum, like something lost; then I will proclaim that the aristocrats, knowing what you had in reserve for them, had seized, victimized, and starved you, so that, like Provost Élie de Beaumont, Monsieur Latude, and others, when found, you will be publicly crowned with flowers by the ladies of La Halle, and the ragpickers of Section Victor. Make haste, then, to appear again an Aristides, else your business is concluded."

"Lorin! Lorin! I feel that you are right; but I am dragged along. I am sliding down the precipice. Are you displeased with me, because my fate drags me onward?"

"I am not displeased with you, but I shall remonstrate with you. Call to mind a few of the scenes enacted daily between Pylades and Orestes, — scenes which prove beyond all doubt that friendship is a paradox, since these model friends quarrelled without ceasing."

"Leave me to my fate, Lorin, you had much better do so."

"I will never abandon you."

"Then, allow me to love, to be mad, at my ease; to be criminal, perhaps, for if I again see her, I fear I shall kill her."

"Or fall upon your knees. Ah, ah, Maurice, Maurice, to love an aristocrat, I never could have credited it! It is like poor Osselin with the Marquise de Charny."

"No more, Lorin, I beseech you."

"Maurice, I will cure you, or may the Devil take me! I do not wish you to be drawn in the lottery of Saint Guillotine, as the grocer of the Rue des Lombards observes. Maurice, you will exasperate me! Maurice, you will render me bloodthirsty! I feel as if I wanted to set fire to the isle of Saint Louis! A torch! a firebrand!

> "The toil were idle. Maurice, thy passion dire
> Sufficient is Paris to set on fire."

Maurice smiled in spite of himself.

"You know," said he, "that it was agreed between us that we should speak only in prose."

"But you exasperate me with your folly," said Lorin. "Drink, Maurice, become a drunkard, do anything, study political economy; but for the love of Jupiter, let us fall in love with nothing but Liberty!"

"Or Reason?"

"Ah! that is true; by the way, the Goddess Reason talks much about you. She thinks you are a charming mortal."

"Are you not jealous?"

"Maurice, to save a friend I feel capable of any sacrifice."

"Thanks, my poor Lorin, and I truly appreciate your

devotion; but the best way to console me is to leave me to sate my grief. Adieu! Lorin, go to your Arthémise."

"And you; where are you going?"

"I shall return home."

And Maurice turned toward the bridge.

"You live, then, in the direction of the old Rue Saint Jacques now?"

"No; but it pleases me to go that way."

"To look once again upon the place inhabited by your fair inconstant?"

"To see if she has not returned where she knows I am awaiting her. Ah, Geneviève! Geneviève! I could not have believed you capable of so much deceit!"

"Maurice, a tyrant who well knew the fair sex, since he died from having loved them too well, said, —

"'Woe to the man who trusts his heart
To woman, changeful as the breeze.'"

Maurice sighed, and the two friends took the road to the old Rue Saint Jacques.

As they approached they heard a great noise, and saw the light increase; they listened to patriotic chants, which on a brilliant day in the glorious sunshine, or in the atmosphere of combat, sounded like hymns of heroism, but which by the red light of an incendiary fire savored more of the diabolic incantations of drunken cannibals.

"Oh, my God! my God!" cried Maurice, forgetting that God had been abolished, as he wiped the perspiration from his face.

Lorin watched him attentively and muttered, —

"Alas! when caught in Cupid's snare,
To Prudence we must bid adieu."

All the inhabitants of Paris appeared moving toward the theatre of the events we have just narrated. Maurice was obliged to cross a hedge formed by the gendarmes, the ranks of the sections, then the impetuous crowd of this always furious populace, at this epoch easily aroused, and who ran howling from spectacle to spectacle without intermission. As they approached, Maurice impatiently hastened his steps; Lorin, with some trouble, kept close behind him, for he did not like to leave his friend to himself at such a moment.

It was nearly all over. The fire had communicated from the shed where the soldier had flung his torch to the workshops, constructed of planks so put together as to allow the free circulation of air; the merchandise was consumed, and the house itself was now in flames.

"O God!" said Maurice to himself, "if she has returned, should she find herself in a chamber encircled by the devouring element, waiting for me, calling on me —" and Maurice, nearly insensible from grief, liked better to think of the folly of those he loved than of his treason. He rushed headlong toward the door, of which he caught a glimpse through the mass of burning flame. Lorin still followed him. He would have followed him to the infernal regions. The roof was in flames; the fire had now indeed commenced its work of destruction on the staircase. Maurice hastened to visit the first floor, the parlor, the chamber of Geneviève, of the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge, and the corridors, calling, in stifled accents, "Geneviève! Geneviève!"

No one replied. On returning from the search our two friends saw volumes of flame now entering the door; but not heeding the shouts of Lorin, who pointed to the window, Maurice passed through the flames, then ran to the house, crossed, notwithstanding all impediments, a

court-yard strewed with broken furniture, searched the dining-room, Dixmer's parlor, Morand's laboratory, — all filled with smoke, fragments, and broken glass. The fire had reached this part of the house and the work of destruction would soon be complete. Maurice, as in the pavilion, did not omit visiting a single chamber, or leave unexamined even a corridor. He then descended to the cellars; perhaps Geneviève had taken refuge from the fire there. He found no one.

"Zounds!" said Lorin; "no one but a salamander could take refuge here, and it is not that fabulous animal that you are in search of. Let us go; we can make inquiry in this assemblage. Some one has perhaps seen her."

It needed all Lorin's force to drag away Maurice; hope still detained him there.

Then they commenced their investigation; they visited the environs, stopped all the females who passed, searched all the alleys, without any result. It was now one o'clock in the morning, and Maurice, notwithstanding his athletic vigor, was overpowered and broken down with fatigue, and at length desisted from his worse than useless efforts.

A carriage passed; Lorin hailed it.

"Come, bear up, old fellow," said he to Maurice; "we have done all in the range of human possibility to recover Geneviève. We have broken our backs, been roasted, and have been cruelly cuffed for her. Cupid, however exacting he may be, could require no more from a man in love, and above all, from one who is not. So jump into the carriage, and let us return home."

Maurice submitted without making any reply. They arrived at Maurice's door without either of the friends having uttered a single word. As Maurice descended

from the carriage, they heard a window of his apartment closed.

"All right!" said Lorin, "he is waiting; I shall rest easy now. Knock, however."

Maurice knocked, the door opened.

"Good-night!" said Lorin, "wait for me to-morrow morning to go out!"

"Good-night," said Maurice, mechanically, as the door closed behind him. Upon the first steps of the staircase he met his official.

"Ah! Citizen Lindey," he exclaimed, "how much uneasiness you have caused us!" The word *us* struck Maurice.

"You?" said he.

"Yes, me and the little lady who is waiting for you."

"The little lady," repeated Maurice, feeling the moment ill-chosen to remind him of his former loves; "you were right to tell me. I shall sleep at Lorin's."

"That is impossible; she was at the window, and saw you alight, and cried out, 'There he is!'"

"What care I whether she knows I am here or not? I have no heart for love. Go upstairs, and tell this woman she is mistaken."

The official made a movement as if to obey him, then stopped.

"Ah! Citizen," said he, "you are wrong. The little lady is already very sad; your message will drive her to despair."

"But," asked Maurice, "who is this woman?"

"Citizen, I have not seen her face; it is concealed by her mantle, and she weeps, that is all I know."

"She weeps!" exclaimed Maurice.

"Yes, but very softly, stifling her sobs."

"She weeps," repeated Maurice; "there is then some one in the world who loves me sufficiently to feel anxious in my absence?" and he ascended slowly behind the official.

"Here he is, Citizen, here he is!" cried the latter, rushing into the chamber. Maurice entered behind him.

He then beheld in a corner of the room the trembling form of a woman whose face was hid in the cushions, and whom he would have thought dead, but for her convulsive moaning, which made him start. He signed to his official to leave the room, who went out, closing the door behind him. Then Maurice ran to the young woman, who raised her head.

"Geneviève!" cried the young man, "Geneviève here! good Heavens! am I then mad?"

"No, you are in possession of your senses, my friend," replied the young woman. "I promised to be yours if you would save the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge. You have saved him, and I am here; I was awaiting you."

Maurice mistook the meaning of these words; he recoiled a step, and looked sadly at the young woman.

"Geneviève," said he, "you do not love me."

Geneviève regarded him with tearful eyes; then turning from him, leaned her head on the pillow of the sofa, and gave free vent to her sobs and tears.

"Alas!" said Maurice, "it is evident that you no longer love me; and not only that you love me no more, Geneviève, but that you must entertain a feeling of hatred toward me, to experience this despair."

Maurice had spoken so nobly, yet with so much feeling, that Geneviève arose and took his hand.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said she, "and is it ever thus that those we think the best prove merely egotists?"

"Egotists, Geneviève! what do you mean?"

"Can you not then imagine what I suffer? My husband a fugitive, my brother proscribed, our house in flames, and all this in one night; and then that dreadful scene between you and the Chevalier was added to the rest!"

Maurice listened with delight, for it was impossible even for the maddest passion not to admit that this accumulation of trouble was more than sufficient excuse for Geneviève's deep and violent grief.

"And now you are come, I shall keep you; you shall leave me no more!"

Geneviève started.

"Where should I go?" replied she, with bitterness. "Have I an asylum, a shelter, a protector, save he who has put a price upon his protection? Oh, rash and foolish that I am! I stepped over the Pont Neuf, Maurice, and in passing I stopped to gaze at the dark water, dashing angrily against the corners of the arches; it attracted and fascinated me. Then said I to myself, there, poor woman, is a shelter for you; there inviolable repose and oblivion!"

"Geneviève! Geneviève!" cried Maurice, "you said that? Then you do not love me?"

"I said it," replied Geneviève, — "I said it; but I am here."

Maurice drew a deep breath, and fell at her feet.

"Geneviève," murmured he, "weep no more! Geneviève, console yourself for all your grief, since you love me. Tell me, Geneviève, for the sake of Heaven! that it was not the violence of my menaces that brought you hither. Assure me that even had you not seen me this evening, on finding yourself alone, isolated, and without an asylum, you would have come to me; and accept the

oath which I now make you, to annul the one that I compelled you to take."

Geneviève looked down upon the young man with an expression of ineffable gratitude. "Generous!" said she; "Oh, my God! I thank thee, he is generous."

"Listen, Geneviève!" said Maurice. "God, whom they have here driven from their temples, but whom they cannot expel from our hearts, where he has implanted love, has made this evening in appearance dark and gloomy, but conceals behind its sombre curtain a silvery cloud. God has conducted you to me, Geneviève, and speaks to you through me. God is at length willing to compensate us for all the sufferings we have endured, for the virtue we have displayed in combating this love, as if this sentiment so long entertained, and so profound, could be a crime! Weep no more, Geneviève, weep no more; give me your hand! Do you wish to live in the house of your brother? Do you wish he should kiss the hem of your robe, and pass over the threshold of his door without turning his head? Well, say but the word, make but one sign, and I am gone, and you are free. But on the other hand, my adored Geneviève, will you call to mind that I have loved you so ardently that I had almost died of this love, which it remains with you to render so fatal or so fortunate to me; that for this love I have been a traitor to my party, and am become vile and contemptible in my own eyes, — will you now consider all the happiness which the future has in store for us, the strength and energy which our youth and love possess to defend this happiness, now but in the bud, from all who would dare attack it? Ah! Geneviève, what will you reply? You who are an angel of mercy, will you render a man so happy that he no longer regrets life, and ceases to desire eternal felicity? Then, instead of repelling me, smile, my Gene-

vière; let me place your hand upon my heart, and incline toward one who worships you from the inmost recesses of his soul. Geneviève, my love, my life, do not take back your vow!"

The heart of the young woman swelled at these words. The fatigue of her late suffering had worn out her strength, and though her tears no longer flowed, occasional sobs relieved her overcharged bosom.

Maurice saw that she no longer had the force to resist, and seized her in his arms. Then she let her head fall on his shoulder, and her long hair brushed against her lover's burning cheeks.

At the same time Maurice felt the heaving of her chest, still disturbed like the ocean after a storm.

"You still weep, my Geneviève," continued Maurice, with profound melancholy, — "you still weep. Oh, reassure yourself! I will never impose my love on scornful grief, and never soil my lips with a kiss empoisoned by a single tear of regret."

He unwound the living girdle of her arms, averted his face, and coldly turned away.

But as quick as thought, in a moment of reaction so natural in a woman who struggles contrary to her own inclination, Geneviève threw her trembling arms around Maurice's neck, pressed him nervously to her heart, and laid her cold cheek, still wet with the tears which had ceased to flow, against the young man's burning one.

"Ah, Maurice!" murmured Geneviève, "do not abandon me, Maurice; I have no one left me in the world but you!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE MORROW.

A BEAUTIFUL sun beamed across the green window-blinds, gilding the leaves of three large roses placed in a flower-stand before the window of Maurice. These flowers, more precious as the season was on the decline, perfumed with a delicious fragrance the little dining-room of spotless neatness, where at a table served with every elegancy, but without profusion, sat Maurice and Geneviève. The door was closed, for as the table contained all that was requisite, it was understood they waited on themselves. They heard the official stirring in the adjoining room. The warmth and life of the last few lovely days entered through the half-open jalousie, making glitter like emeralds and rubies the rose-leaves caressed by the rays of the sun.

Geneviève let fall upon her plate the golden fruit she held in her hand. She appeared to be deep in thought, and smiling only with her lips, while her eyes languished with a melancholy expression. She remained thus silent, abstracted, and happy in the sun of her love, as the beautiful flowers in the sun of heaven. Soon her eyes sought those of Maurice, and encountered his gazing upon her. She placed her soft white arm upon the young man's shoulder, and leaned on his breast with that faith and confidence far exceeding love.

Geneviève looked at him without speaking, and blushed as she regarded him. Maurice slightly inclined his head

to imprint a kiss upon the half-open lips of Geneviève. He bent his head, while she turned pale, and closed her eyes as the delicate flower conceals its calyx from the rays of light. They remained dreaming thus, when a sharp ring at the door-bell suddenly startled them.

The official entered mysteriously, and closed the door.

"Here is the Citizen Lorin," said he.

"Ah! dear Lorin," said Maurice, "I will go and dismiss him. Pardon, Geneviève."

Geneviève stopped him.

"Dismiss your friend, Maurice!" said she, "and such a friend! one who has consoled, assisted, and sustained you? No; I would no more drive such a friend from your house than from your heart. Let him come in, Maurice; let him come in."

"With your permission?" said Maurice.

"I wish it," said Geneviève.

"Ah! you will find that to love you is not enough," cried Maurice, delighted with her delicacy; "it is necessary to adore you!"

Geneviève held her blushing face to the young man. He opened the door, and Lorin entered, smart as usual in his costume of demi-muscadin. On perceiving Geneviève he manifested great surprise, which was succeeded by a respectful salute.

"Come here, Lorin, come here, and look at the lady! You are dethroned, Lorin. I have now some one I prefer to yourself. I would have given my life for you; for her, — I tell you nothing new, Lorin, — for her I have sacrificed my honor."

"Madame," replied Lorin, in accents of deep emotion, "I shall endeavor to value Maurice the more, that he has not altogether ceased to care for me."

"Sit down, sir," said Geneviève, smiling.

"Yes, sit down," said Maurice, who, having pressed in his right hand that of his friend, and in his left that of his mistress, presented the appearance of a man arrived at the height of human felicity.

"Then you do not wish to die now; do not wish any longer to kill yourself?"

"What do you mean?" asked Geneviève, turning pale.

"Oh, in good truth!" said Lorin, "man is a most versatile animal, and philosophers have good cause to despise his levity. Here is one, would you believe it, Madame, who no longer ago than yesterday evening wished to leap into the fire, throw himself into the water; who declared there was no more happiness for him in this world. And behold him this morning, gay, joyous, with a smile upon his lips, his countenance resplendent with happiness, life in his heart, seated at a well-furnished table; it is true he has not eaten much, but that does not prove he is unhappy."

"Did he wish to do all this?" said Geneviève.

"All this, and much more. I will tell you all, some day, but at this moment I am very hungry; it is all Maurice's fault for making me yesterday evening run all over the Quarter Saint Jacques. Permit me, then, to make an attack upon the breakfast, which I perceive you have neither of you yet touched."

"That is right," said Maurice, with childish glee; "I have not breakfasted, nor have you, Geneviève."

He watched Lorin's eyes as he uttered her name; but Lorin evinced no surprise.

"Ah!" said Maurice, "you have already surmised who it is, Lorin."

"Zounds!" said Lorin, cutting himself a large slice of white and rosy ham, and not seeming to hear Maurice's remark.

"I, also, am hungry," said Geneviève, holding her plate.

"Lorin," said Maurice, "I was ill yesterday."

"You were worse than ill; you were mad."

"Well, I think it is you who are suffering at this moment."

"Why?"

"You have not yet given us any verses."

"I will sing you one this moment," said Lorin, —

"Phœbus, in the midst of the Graces,
The lyre in his hand still retained,
Till following of Venus the traces,
'T was lost, and could not be regained."

"Always ready with a quatrain," said Maurice, laughing.

"And you will have to be contented with it, as it is now necessary to turn our attention to more serious affairs."

"Has anything new occurred, then?" said Maurice, anxiously.

"I am ordered on guard at the Conciergerie."

"At the Conciergerie!" said Geneviève, "near the queen?"

"Near the queen. I believe so, Madame."

Geneviève turned pale. Maurice frowned, and made a sign to Lorin, who cut himself another slice of ham, double the size of the first. The queen had indeed been removed to the Conciergerie, whither we shall follow her.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CONCIERGERIE.

At a corner of the Pont au Change and of the Quai aux Fleurs rose the remains of the old palace of Saint Louis, called *par excellence* the palace, as Rome is called the city, and which still continues to retain the royal cognomen, when the only kings who inhabit it are the registrars, the judges, and the pleaders.

The house of justice was a large and sombre building, exciting more fear than love for the merciless goddess. There might be seen united in this narrow space all the instruments and attributes of human vengeance. The first wards were assigned to those who had been arraigned for crime; farther on were the halls of judgment, and lower down the dungeons of the condemned. By the door was a small space where the red-hot iron stamped its mark of infamy; and about one hundred and fifty paces from the first another space, far more extensive, where the last act of the fearful tragedy took place, — that is to say, La Grève, where they finished the work previously sketched out for them at the Palace. Justice, as we see, reigned paramount over all.

All these portions of the edifice joined one with another, sullen-looking, dark, and gray, pierced by iron-grated windows where the gaping arches resemble the grated dens extending along the side of the Quai des Lunettes. This is the Conciergerie.

This prison contains dens washed by the black mud from the waters of the Seine; it also possesses mysterious outlets, through which were formerly conducted to the river those miserable victims whom it was thought necessary to remove.

As seen in 1793, the Conciergerie, unwearying *procureur* for the scaffold, — the Conciergerie overflowed with occupants, who within an hour became the victims of the guillotine. At this epoch the old prison of Saint Louis was literally the Inn of Death. Under the arches some gates were hung, and at night a red lantern was suspended there, fit emblem of this abode of misery and despair.

The evening preceding the day when Lorin, Maurice, and Geneviève were breakfasting together, a dull rumbling shook the pavement of the quay and rattled the windows of the prison, then ceased before the arched gate. The gendarmes knocked with the handles of their swords, the gate opened, and a carriage entered the court; when the hinges had turned, and the rusty bolts had creaked, a female descended.

The gaping wicket opened immediately to receive her, and closed upon her. Three or four curious heads, protruding to gaze upon the prisoner by the light of the torches, appeared in mezzo-tinto, then vanished in the darkness, while vulgar jokes and rude laughter passed between the men leaving, who could be heard though not seen.

The person thus brought remained within the first wicket with the gendarmes; she saw it would be necessary to pass through a second, but forgot at the same time to raise the foot and lower the head, as there is a step to ascend and a beam which descends. The prisoner, not yet well habituated to prison architecture, notwithstanding her long sojourn there, omitted

to stoop, and struck her forehead violently against the bar.

"Are you much hurt, Citizeness?" demanded one of the gendarmes.

"Nothing can hurt me now," she replied tranquilly, and passed on without uttering a single complaint, although sanguinary traces of the injury remained upon her brow.

Shortly the arm-chair of the keeper became visible, — a chair more venerated by the prisoners than the throne of the king by his courtiers; for the keeper of a prison is the dispenser of favor, and all mercy is important to a prisoner, as sometimes the smallest kindness may change the darkest gloom to a heaven of light.

The keeper Richard, installed in his arm-chair, felt a due perception of his own importance. He remained undisturbed even when the rumbling of the carriage announced a new arrival. He inhaled some snuff, regarded the prisoner, opened a large register, and looked for a pen in the little ink-horn of black wood, where the ink, incrusted on the sides, retained in the centre a mouldy humidity, as in the midst of the crater of a volcano there always remains some melted matter.

"Citizen Keeper," said the chief of the escort, "write, and write quickly, for they are impatiently awaiting us at the Commune."

"I will not be long," said the porter, at the same time emptying into the inkstand some drops of wine remaining at the bottom of his glass; "I am a good hand at this, thank God! Your name and surname, Citizen,' said he, and dipping his pen at the same time into this improvised ink, he commenced entering the new arrival at the bottom of a page already nearly filled; while standing behind his chair, Madame Richard, a female of benevolent

aspect, contemplated, with a mixture of astonishment and respect, this woman, so sad, so noble, and so proud, whom her husband interrogated.

"Marie Antoinette Jeanne Josèphe de Lorraine," replied the prisoner, "Archduchess of Austria and Queen of France."

"Queen of France!" repeated the keeper, raising himself in astonishment by the arms of his chair.

"Queen of France," repeated the prisoner, in the same voice.

"Otherwise called the Widow Capet," said the chief of the escort.

"Under which of these names am I to enter her?" demanded the keeper.

"Whichever you please, only do it quickly," said the chief of the escort.

The keeper reseated himself, and with a trembling hand wrote down the name, surname, and titles given him by the prisoner, inscriptions the ink of which still appears visible to this day upon the register of which the revolutionary rats of the Conciergerie have nibbled the leaf at its most precious part.

Richard's wife still retained her position behind her husband's chair, and remained standing with her hands clasped together, commiserating the situation of the unfortunate being before her.

"Your age?" continued the keeper.

"Thirty-seven years and nine months," replied the queen.

Richard wrote this down, then the description, and finished with the regular notes and forms.

"There," said he, "that is completed."

"Where shall we conduct the prisoner?" said the chief of the escort.

Richard helped himself to a second pinch of snuff, and looked at his wife.

"Indeed," said she, "we did not anticipate this, and have had but brief notice, so that we hardly know —"

"You must find out," said the brigadier.

"There is the council chamber," said Richard's wife.

"Too large," murmured Richard.

"The larger the better; we can the more easily place the guards."

"Go to the council chamber," said Richard. "But it is not habitable at this moment; it has no bed."

"True," replied his wife, "I had quite forgotten that."

"Bah!" said one of the gendarmes, "you can put a bed there to-morrow, and to-morrow will soon be here."

"Besides, the citizen could occupy our chamber for one night; could she not, good man?" said Richard's wife.

"And what are we to do?" said the keeper.

"Oh, we can do without a bed for one night; and as the citizen gendarme observes, 'the night is nearly gone.'"

"Then," said Richard, "conduct the citizeness to our chamber."

"And in the mean while you will prepare our receipt?"

"It shall be ready on your return."

Richard's wife took the candle from the table, and led the way.

Marie Antoinette followed without uttering a word, calm and pale as usual. Two turnkeys, at a sign from Richard's wife, followed them. The queen was shown her bed, on which the woman hastened to place clean sheets. The turnkeys installed themselves outside; the door was double-locked; and Marie Antoinette was left alone.

How she passed that night no one ever knew, as she

passed it in close communion with her God. On the next day the queen was conducted to the council chamber, a long four-sided room, the wicket-door of which opened upon a corridor of the Conciergerie, and which had been divided in its whole length by a partition which did not reach the height of the ceiling.

One of these compartments was occupied by the men on guard. The other was the chamber of the queen. A window, thickly-grated with small iron bars, lighted both these cells. A folding-screen, the substitute for a door, secluded the queen from the guards, and closed the aperture in the middle. The whole of this room was paved with brick. The walls, at one period or another, had been covered with gilded wood, where still hung some shreds of paper fleur-de-lis. A bed was placed opposite the window, and a single chair near the light. This was all the furniture the royal prison contained.

On entering, the queen requested that her books and work might be brought her. They brought her the "Revolutions of England," which she had commenced in the Temple, the "Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis," and her tapestry.

The gendarmes established themselves in the adjoining compartment. History has preserved their names, as it has done that of many others more infamous, associated by destiny in great events, and who see reflected on themselves a fragment of that light cast by the thunderbolt which destroys the thrones of kings, perhaps even the kings themselves.

They were called Duchesne and Gilbert.

These two men were selected by the Commune, who knew them to be stanch patriots. They were to remain at their post in their cell till the sentence of Marie Antoinette. They hoped by this measure to avoid the

irregularities consequent upon a change of office several times during the day, and therefore laid the guards under a heavy responsibility.

The queen first became acquainted with this new regulation from the conversation of the gendarmes, whose discourse, not being softly uttered, reached her ears. She experienced at once joy and disquietude; for if on the one hand she felt that these men ought to be trustworthy since they had been chosen from a multitude, on the other side she reflected that her friends might more easily corrupt two known men at their post than a hundred unknown individuals selected by chance, passing near her occasionally, and then only for a single day.

On the first night before she retired one of the gendarmes, according to his usual custom, began to smoke. The noxious vapor glided imperceptibly through the apertures of the partition, enveloping the unfortunate queen, whose misfortunes had irritated instead of deadening her nerves. She soon felt herself seized with nausea and swimming in the head; but true to her indomitable system of firmness, she uttered no complaint.

During her melancholy vigil, while nothing disturbed the deep silence of the night, she fancied she heard plaintive cries outside. These cries were mournful and prolonged; there was about them something weird and piercing, like the howling of wind in the dark and deserted corridor when the tempest borrows the human voice to animate the passions of the elements.

She soon became aware that the noise that had at first startled her was the doleful and persevering cry of a dog howling on the quay. She immediately remembered her poor little Jet, whom she had not thought of when they removed her from the Temple, and now believed she

could recognize his voice. Indeed, the poor little animal, who by his mistaken vigilance had ruined his mistress, had unperceived descended behind her, had followed the carriage as far as the grating of the Conciergerie, where he continued till he narrowly escaped being cut in two by the double iron portcullis which closed behind her.

But the faithful creature had soon returned, and comprehending that his mistress was confined in this great stone building, he whined and howled, waiting, within ten feet of the sentinel, a caressing reply. The queen replied by a heart-broken sigh which reached the ears of her guards; but as this sigh was not repeated, and no other sound proceeded from the queen's chamber, they again composed themselves, and relapsed into their former state of drowsiness.

At break of day the queen rose and dressed herself, then took her seat near the window, the light from which, intercepted by the grating of iron bars, fell with a bluish tint upon her emaciated hands, in which she held a book. She was apparently reading, but her thoughts were far away.

The Gendarme Gilbert half opened the screen, and regarded her in silence. The queen heard the noise of the screen, but did not turn her head. She was so seated that the gendarme could see her head bathed in the morning light. Gilbert made a sign to his comrade to advance and look through the opening with him. Duchesne approached.

"Look!" said Gilbert, in a low tone; "how very pale she is; it is frightful! Those red circles round her eyes denote her suffering. She has surely been weeping."

"You well know," said Duchesne, "Capet's widow never weeps. She is too proud for that."

"Then she must be ill," said Gilbert, and raising his voice, "Tell me, Citizen Capet," said he, "are you ill?"

The queen slowly raised her eyes, and fixed an inquiring look upon the two men.

"Did you address me, gentlemen?" demanded she, in a voice full of sweetness, for she fancied she detected the accent of kindness in him who had spoken to her.

"Yes, Citizeness, we spoke to you," replied Gilbert; "we feared you were ill."

"Why so?"

"Because your eyes are so red."

"And at the same time you are so pale," added Duchesne.

"Thank you, gentlemen, I am not ill; only I suffered much last night."

"Ah, yes, your misfortunes!"

"No, gentlemen, my miseries are always the same; and my religion having taught me to carry them to the foot of the cross, I do not suffer more one day than another. No; I am out of sorts because I could not rest last night."

"Ah! your new lodging and different bed?" said Duchesne.

"And then the lodging is not very comfortable," added Gilbert.

"Ah! it is not that, gentlemen," said the queen, shaking her head. "Lofty or lowly, it is all the same to me."

"What is it then?"

"I ask pardon for telling you; but I have suffered much inconvenience from the smell of the tobacco which that gentleman is smoking at this moment."

Indeed, Gilbert was smoking, which was his habitual occupation.

"Confound my stupidity!" cried he, much grieved from the kindness with which the queen had expressed herself. "Why did you not tell me so before, Citizen?"

"Because I thought, sir, I had no right to deprive you of any enjoyment."

"Well, you shall be incommoded no more, — by me, at least," said Gilbert, casting away his pipe, which broke upon the tiles, "for I shall smoke no more."

He turned round, his companion followed, and he closed the screen.

"Possibly they may cut off her head, that is an affair of the nation; but why should we cause her any suffering, poor woman? We are soldiers, and not hangmen, like Simon."

"It rather savors of the aristocrat, comrade, what you did just now," said Duchesne, shaking his head.

"Whom do you term an aristocrat? Explain yourself!"

"I call aristocrats all those who annoy the nation, and succor its enemies."

"Then, according to your theory, I annoy the nation because I cease to annoy with my smoking the Widow Capet? Go along, then! As for me," continued the brave fellow, "I remember my oath to my country, and the order of my brigadier. As for my order, I know it by heart. Not to permit the prisoner to escape; not to allow any one to see her; to resist all correspondence she may endeavor to institute; and to die at my post, — this is what I promised, and to this will I keep. *Vive la nation!*"

"That is what I tell you," said Duchesne. "It is not that I disapprove of your conduct, but I fear lest you should compromise yourself."

"Hush! here is some one."

The queen had not lost one word of this conversation,

although carried on in a low voice. Captivity had rendered her hearing doubly acute.

The noise which had attracted the attention of the two guards was the sound of several steps approaching the door. It opened, and two municipals entered, followed by the keeper and some of the turnkeys.

"Well," they inquired, "where is the prisoner?"

"Here she is," replied the two gendarmes.

"How is she lodged?"

"You can see." And Gilbert touched the screen.

"What do you wish?" demanded the queen.

"It is the visit of the Commune, Citizeness Capet."

"This man is kind," thought the queen; "and if my friends —"

"Very good, very good!" said the municipals, pushing Gilbert aside and entering the queen's chamber; "so much ceremony is not requisite here."

The queen did not even raise her head; and it might have been believed from her impassibility that she neither saw nor heard them, but fancied herself alone. The delegates of the Commune curiously observed everything around the chamber, sounded the wainscoting, the bed, shaking the grating of the window which looked upon the court of the female prisoners, and then having recommended to the gendarmes the utmost vigilance, took their departure without having addressed a word to the queen, who on her part seemed not to have been aware of their presence.

CHAPTER XXXV.

LA SALLE DES PAS-PERDUS.

Toward the decline of the day on which we have seen the municipals so carefully inspecting the queen's prison, a man attired in a gray jacket, his head covered with a mass of black hair, and on his head one of those hairy bonnets, which then among the people was a distinguishing mark of the most exaggerated patriotism, was walking about in the large hall so philosophically termed "La Salle des Pas-Perdus," and seemed most attentively observing all the goers and comers forming the general population of this hall, — a population considerably augmented at this period, when trials had acquired greater importance, and when the only pleading was to dispute their heads with the hangman and with Fouquier Tinville their indefatigable purveyor.

The attitude assumed by this man whose portrait we have just sketched was in very good taste. Society at this epoch was divided into two classes, — the lambs and the wolves. The one naturally inspired the other with fear, since one half of society devoured the other. Our fierce promenader was rather short, and wielded in his dirty black hand one of those knotted cudgels then called "constitutions." It is true the hand that flourished this horrible weapon might have appeared rather small to any one who might take into his head to act the inquisitorial part toward this singular personage which he had arrogated to himself with respect to others; but

no one felt the least inclined to risk it, for this man's aspect was far too terrible.

Indeed, this man with the cudgel caused much disquietude to several groups of petty scribes engaged in the discussion of public affairs, which at this time daily progressed from bad to worse, or from better to better, according as they were considered from a conservative or revolutionary point of view. These valorous folks looked askance at his long black beard, his green eyes surmounted by overhanging, shaggy eyebrows, and trembled whenever the promenade of the mighty patriot (a promenade which extended the whole length of the great hall) brought them in near contact with one another.

This terror was augmented from the fact that whenever they ventured to approach him too nearly, or even looked at him too attentively, the man with the cudgel struck his powerful weapon with its full weight upon the pavement, smashing the flag-stones upon which it fell, sometimes with a dull and heavy, sometimes with a sonorous and clashing sound.

But it was not only these brave men among the scribes, designated generally as the "rats of the Palace," who experienced this formidable impression; it was also the various individuals who entered the Salle des Pas-Perdus by the great door, or through some of its narrow vomitories, who also quickened their pace on perceiving the man with the cudgel, who obstinately continued his journey from one end of the hall to the other, finding each moment some pretext for making his weapon ring on the pavement.

If these writers had been less timorous, and the promenaders more clear-sighted, they would have discovered that our patriot, capricious like all eccentric or pronounced characters, appeared to evince a preference for certain

flag-stones, those for instance situated a little distance from the wall on the right, near the centre of the hall, which emitted a clear and ringing sound. He even finished by concentrating his anger upon some particular stones in the centre of the hall. At the same time he so far forgot himself as to stop, and with his eye seemed to be estimating the distance.

True, it was a momentary absence of mind only, and he immediately resumed his former expression, which a gleam of pleasure had replaced for an instant.

Almost at the same moment another patriot, — for at this epoch every one wore his opinions on his forehead, or rather in his dress, — almost at the same moment, say we, another patriot entered by the door of the gallery, and without appearing the least in the world to partake of the fear generated by the former occupant, began to cross the hall at a pace equal to his own, so that in the centre of the promenade they encountered each other.

The new arrival had, like the former, a hairy bonnet, a gray jerkin, dirty hands, and in one of them a cudgel; indeed, in addition he carried a sword, which struck against his legs at every step; and on the whole he appeared a greater subject for terror than his predecessor. The first had an air of ferocity, the last seemed replete with sinister cunning.

Although these two men appeared to belong to the same cause, and entertained the same opinions, the assembly ventured to watch the result, not of their meeting, for they were not walking in the same line, but their approach toward each other. At the first turn they were disappointed in their expectation, as the patriots contented themselves with exchanging looks; at the same time the smaller of the two turned slightly pale, — only

from an involuntary movement of the lips it was evident it was not caused by fear, but by disgust.

However, at the second turn, as if the patriot had made a violent effort, his countenance, till now so overcast, cleared up suddenly, and something like a smile passed over his lips as he inclined slightly to the left, with the evident intention of stopping the second patriot in his course.

Near the centre they joined each other.

"Why, upon my word, here is the Citizen Simon!" said the first patriot.

"Himself. But what do you want with the Citizen Simon? And, in the first place, who are you?"

"It seems, then, that you do not recognize me?"

"I do not recognize you, and for an excellent reason, — I never saw you before."

"Not recognize me! — when I had the honor to carry the head of the Princess Lamballe!"

At these words, pronounced with savage fury, and bursting passionately from the mouth of the patriot, Simon started.

"You?" said he, "you?"

"Ha! that surprises you! I thought that you would remember your friends better than that, faith! Ah, Citizen! you grieve me."

"You have done very well," said Simon; "but I did not recognize you."

"It is a greater privilege to act as guardian to the young Capet; it brings you more into notice. As for myself, I both know and esteem you."

"Ah! Thank you."

"You have no reason — are you taking a walk?"

"Yes; I am waiting for some one. And you?"

"I am doing the same."

"What is your name? I will make mention of you at the club."

"I am called Théodore."

"What else?"

"Nothing else: is not that enough?"

"Oh, certainly. Who are you waiting for, Citizen Théodore?"

"A friend to whom I wish to make a fine little denunciation."

"Indeed! Do tell me."

"A whole covey of aristocrats."

"What are their names?"

"No, indeed; I only tell that to my friend."

"You are wrong; for here is mine advancing toward us, who, it seems to me, is sufficiently acquainted with business to settle at once all this affair."

"Fouquier Tinville!" cried the first patriot.

"No one less, friend."

"That 's all right."

"Yes. Good-day, Citizen Fouquier."

Fouquier Tinville, calm and pale, opening wide, according to habit, his large black eyes shaded by his bushy eyebrows, at this moment entered by a side-door, his register in his hand, and a bundle of papers under his arm. "Good-day, Simon," said he; "anything new?"

"Several things. First, a denunciation from Citizen Théodore, who carried the head of the Princess Lamballe. I will introduce him to you."

Fouquier fixed his scrutinizing glance upon the patriot, who, notwithstanding his strong nerves, felt rather uneasy while undergoing this examination.

"Théodore!" said he; "and who is Théodore?"

"I!" said the man in the jerkin.

"You carried the head of the Princess Lamballe?"

said the public accuser, with an unmistakable expression of doubt.

"I. Rue Saint Antoine."

"But I know a person who boasts that he did so," said Fouquier.

"I know ten," replied the Citizen Théodore, courageously; "but, indeed, as they all make some claim for having done so, and I ask nothing, at least I ought to have the preference, I hope."

This reply excited Simon's laughter, and dispersed the cloud on the accuser's brow.

"Right," said he; "and if you did not do it, you ought to have done so. But leave us now; Simon has some business to transact with me."

Théodore retired, very little hurt by the frankness of the public accuser.

"One moment," cried Simon. "Do not send him away so; let us first hear his denunciation."

"Ah!" said Fouquier Tinville, with an absent air, "a denunciation?"

"Yes; a covey of conspirators," replied Simon.

"All in good time. Speak; what is the matter now?"

"Oh! not much; only the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge and some of his friends."

Fouquier made a leap backward, while Simon raised his arms toward heaven.

"Is this the truth?" they exclaimed, both together.

"The pure truth; will you take them?"

"At once. Where are they?"

"I met the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge in the Rue de la Grande Tissanderie."

"You are mistaken; he is not in Paris," replied Fouquier.

"I tell you I have seen him."

"Impossible! a hundred men have been sent in pursuit of him; he would not show himself in the streets of Paris."

"It was he, by Heaven!" said the patriot. "A tall dark man, as strong as three and bearded like the pard."

Fouquier shrugged his shoulders disdainfully.

"Another blunder," said he; "the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge is short, pale, and has not the slightest sign of a beard."

The patriot dropped his weapon with an air of consternation.

"Never mind, your good intention is taken for the act. Come, Simon, we must both make haste; they require the register, this is the time for the carts."

"Well, there is nothing new; the child is well." The patriot turned his back that he might not appear indiscreet, but remained in a position which enabled him to hear.

"I will go," said he, "lest I should intrude."

"Adieu!" said Simon.

"Good-day," said Fouquier.

"Tell your friend that you were deceived," added Simon.

"Well, I shall wait," and Théodore removed to a short distance, and stood resting on his cudgel.

"So the child goes on well; but how fares he morally?" asked Fouquier.

"I mould him to my will."

"He will speak then?"

"When I choose."

"Do you think he will testify in the trial of Antoinette?"

"I do not think it; I am sure of it."

Théodore was leaning against a pillar, his eyes directed toward the door. But his eye was wandering, while his

ears were erect and uncovered under the hairy bonnet he wore. Perhaps he saw nothing, but most assuredly he heard something.

"Reflect well," said Fouquier, "and do not make what is termed a blunder of this commission. You feel sure that Capet will speak?"

"He will say all that I require."

"Has he told you what we are going to ask him?"

"He has told me."

"It is important, Simon, that you should promise this; the child's evidence is fatal to the mother."

"Zounds! I count upon that."

"There will have been nothing equal to it seen since the intimacy between Nero and Narcissus. Once more, reflect, Simon."

"One would fancy you took me for a brute, repeating constantly the same thing. Take this as an example: when I put leather in water it becomes supple, does it not?"

"But — I do not know," replied Fouquier.

"It becomes soft. Well, in my hands the little Capet becomes supple as the softest leather. I have my own method for that."

"It may be so," said Fouquier. "Is that all you have to say?"

"All — I forgot. There is a denunciation."

"Again? You will overwhelm me with business," said Fouquier.

"One must serve his country."

Simon presented a small paper, black as the leather he had just mentioned, but certainly less supple. Fouquier took it and read the contents.

"Again the Citizen Lorin; you have a great hatred to this man."

"I find him always acting in hostility to the law. He said, 'Adieu, Madame,' to a woman who saluted him from a window yesterday evening. To-morrow, I hope to give you a little information concerning another 'suspect;' that Maurice who was Municipal at the Temple when that affair of the red carnation occurred."

"Be sure! be sure!" exclaimed Fouquier, smiling at Simon.

He held out his hand, and then turned away with an abruptness that evinced little favor toward the shoemaker.

"What the devil do you wish me to be sure of? Many have been guillotined for much less."

"Patience," replied Fouquier, quietly; "everything cannot be done at the same time," and he passed quickly through the wicket.

Simon looked round for the Citizen Théodore, to console himself with him. He was no longer to be seen.

He had hardly crossed the western iron gate, when Théodore reappeared at the corner of a writer's hut. The occupant of the hut accompanied him.

"At what hour are the iron gates closed?" asked Théodore of this man.

"At five o'clock."

"Then what do they do here?"

"Nothing; the hall remains empty till next day."

"No rounds, no visits?"

"No, sir; our barracks are locked."

The word "sir" made Théodore knit his brows, and look round with distrust.

"Are the crowbar and pistols safe in the barracks?" said he.

"Yes, under the carpet."

"Return home, then — By the bye, show me again

the chamber of the Tribunal that has not a grated window, and looks upon the court near the Place Dauphine."

"To the left, between the pillars under the lantern."

"Go, now, and have the horses ready at the place assigned!"

"A glorious chance! — a glorious chance! — depend fully upon me."

"Now is your time — No one is looking — open your barrack."

"It is done, sir; I will pray for you."

"It is not for me you ought to pray. Adieu."

And the Citizen Théodore, after an eloquent look, glided so adroitly under the low roof of the barrack, that he disappeared like the shadow of the writer who closed the door.

The worthy scribe drew the key from the lock, took some papers under his arm, and went out of the vast hall with the few employees that the stroke of five sent rushing from their desks like a rear-guard of belated bees.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CITIZEN THÉODORE.

NIGHT had enveloped in her gray mantle the immense hall, whose sad echoes had to repeat the severe words of the advocates and the suppliant ones of the pleaders.

From afar, in the midst of the obscurity, upright and immovable, a white column seemed watching, in the centre of the hall, like a phantom protector over the sacred place.

The only noise heard in this darkness was the nibbling and galloping of innumerable rats, which gnawed the papers enclosed in the writer's huts, after drilling their way through the wood.

Sometimes the sound of a carriage penetrated as far as this sanctuary of Themis (as an Academician would say), and the vague clanking of keys, which appeared to proceed from under the ground; but all this only reverberated in the distance, and nothing save these distant sounds ever broke the deep silence, or penetrated the thick darkness save the glimmering of some far remote light.

Certainly the man would be seized by bewildering terror who at this hour would have ventured into the vast hall of the Palace, the exterior of whose walls was yet stained with the blood of the victims of September; whose staircases this very day had witnessed the descent of twenty-five human beings condemned to an ignominious death, and were separated only by a few

feet from the dungeons of the Conciergerie, peopled with bleached skeletons.

Nevertheless, in the middle of this frightful night, in the midst of this almost solemn silence, a low grating noise was heard; the door of a writer's hut turned upon its creaking hinges, and a shadow, darker than the shadow of night, glided cautiously out of the barrack.

Then the fierce patriot we have heard addressed as "sir," but who called himself Théodore, stepped lightly over the uneven stones. He held in his right hand a ponderous iron lever, and with his left felt that his double-barrelled pistol was secure in his belt.

"I reckoned twelve flag-stones from the stall; and see, here is the end of the first!" murmured he; and while calculating, he groped with the point of his foot to discover the chinks which time had rendered more perceptible.

"Let me see," said he, stopping; "have I taken my measurement correctly? Shall I possess strength sufficient; and she — will she have the courage? Oh, yes, her courage is known to me. Oh, my God! When I shall take her hand — when I can say, Madame, you are saved!"

He suddenly paused, as if oppressed by the weight of so great a hope.

"Ah!" he resumed, "rash and foolish project! others will say, hiding themselves under their bedclothes, or contenting themselves by sauntering about disguised as lackeys through the Conciergerie; but they have not my motive for daring all, — it is, that I not only desire to serve the queen, but the woman.

"Well, to work; let us again sum up the whole.

"To raise the stone is nothing, to leave it open is the danger, — they may perhaps make the rounds; but yet

they never do so. They cannot suspect anything, for I have no accomplices; and then what time is needed by an ardor like mine to dart through the dark passage? In three minutes I am under her chamber; in other five I raise the stone which is on the hearth. She will hear me working, but has too much firmness to feel alarmed; on the contrary, she will understand that a deliverer is near — She is guarded by two men who will doubtless hasten to the spot —

"Well, after all," said the patriot, with a melancholy smile, looking first at the weapon concealed in his girdle, and then at the one he held poised in his hand, "a double shot from this pistol, or a couple of strokes from this iron bar. Poor creatures! they will die like others not more culpable than themselves."

And Citizen Théodore resolutely pressed his lever between the chinks of the flag-stones.

At this moment a vivid light gleamed like a ray of gold across the stones, and a noise, repeated by the echoes of the vault, caused the conspirator to turn, and then with a single bound to conceal himself in the stall.

Soon voices, weakened by the distance, and softened by the emotion experienced by every one at night in a large and desolate building, reached the ears of Théodore.

He stooped down, and through an aperture in the stall perceived first a man in military costume, whose long sabre clanking on the pavement partly produced the sound which had attracted his attention; then, a man in a pistachio-colored suit, holding a rule in his hand and a roll of papers under his arm; thirdly, a man in a large waistcoat of ratteen and a fur bonnet; and lastly, a fourth, with wooden shoes and a jerkin.

The iron gate Des Merciers creaked upon its sonorous hinges, rattling the chain intended to keep it open during the day.

The four men entered.

"A round," murmured Théodore. "God be praised! ten minutes later and I should have been ruined."

He then with the utmost attention endeavored to recognize the individuals who composed the round, — indeed, three of them were known to him.

He who walked first, clad in the uniform of a general, was Santerre; the man in the ratteen waistcoat and fur bonnet was Richard the porter, and the man in clogs and jerkin was in all probability a turnkey.

But he had never seen the man in the pistachio-colored coat, who held a rule in his hand and a bundle of papers under his arm. Who or what could this man be; and what brought, at ten o'clock at night, to the Salle des Pas-Perdus, the general of the Commune, the keeper of the Conciergerie, a turnkey, and this other man? The Citizen Theodore knelt on one knee, holding in one hand his loaded pistol, while with the other he replaced his bonnet and hair, which his precipitous movement had deranged too much to look natural.

Up to this moment the nocturnal visitors had kept silence, or if they had spoken, their words had not reached the ears of the conspirator; but when about ten paces from his lurking place Santerre spoke, and his voice was distinctly heard by the Citizen Théodore.

"We are now," said he, "in the Salle des Pas-Perdus. It is for you now to guide us, Citizen Architect, and to endeavor to convince us that your revelation is no idle story; for you see the Revolution has done justice to all this folly, and we believe no more in these subterranean passages than in ghosts. What do you say, Citizen

Richard?" added Santerre, turning toward the man in the fur bonnet and ratteen vest.

"I have never said there was no subterranean passage under the Conciergerie," he replied. "Here is Gracchus, who has been turnkey for ten years, and consequently is as familiar with the whole of the Conciergerie as he is with the alphabet, and yet he ignores the existence of the vault of which the Citizen Giraud has spoken. However, as the Citizen Giraud is the city architect, he ought to know better than any of us. It is his business."

Théodore shivered from head to foot on hearing these words.

"Fortunately," murmured he, "the hall is large, and before they find what they search for, two days at least must expire."

But the architect opened his great roll of papers, put on his spectacles, and knelt down to examine the plan by the flickering light of the lantern which Gracchus held in his hand.

"I fear," said Santerre, ironically, "that the Citizen Giraud has been dreaming."

"You will see, Citizen General, if I am a dreamer. Wait a little; wait!"

"You see we are waiting," said Santerre.

"Good!" said the architect; and he began to calculate. "Twelve and four make sixteen," said he, "and eight are twenty-four, which, divided by six, makes four, and then half remains; that is it. I can tell the very spot; and if I am mistaken by so much as a foot, you may henceforth dub me an ass."

The architect pronounced these words with an assurance which curdled the blood of the Citizen Théodore.

Santerre regarded the plan with a species of respect, but evidently admired more than he comprehended it.

"Now follow what I say."

"Where?" asked Santerre.

"Zounds! upon this chart which I have drawn. Here we are! thirteen feet from the wall is a movable stone I have marked A; do you see it?"

"Certainly, I see A," said Santerre. "Do you think I do not know how to read?"

"Under this stone," continued the architect, "is a staircase; do you see? It is marked B."

"B!" said Santerre; "I see B, but I do not see the staircase," and the general laughed heartily at his own facetiousness.

"When once the stone is raised, and the foot upon the last step, count fifty paces, look up, and you will find yourself exactly at the register-office where the subterraneous passage terminates, passing under the cell of the queen."

"Capet's widow, you mean, Citizen Giraud," said Santerre, knitting his brows.

"Yes, Capet's widow."

"But you said 'the queen.'"

"The force of old habit."

"You say, then, it may be found under the register-office?" demanded Richard.

"Not only under the register-office, but I will tell you also in what part of the office you will discover it,—under the stove."

"That is curious," said Gracchus, "for I have noticed that every time I dropped a log in that place the stone sounded hollow."

"In short, if we find your statement correct, Citizen Architect, I shall pronounce geometry a fine thing."

"Then declare it, Citizen Santerre, for I am now going to conduct you to the place indicated by the letter A."

The Citizen Theodore sank his nails into his flesh.

"When I have seen it," said Santerre, — "when I have seen it! I rather resemble Saint Thomas."

"Ah! you said Saint Thomas."

"Yes, as you said 'the queen,' from mere habit; but they cannot accuse me of conspiring for him."

"Nor me for the queen."

After this retort the architect delicately placed his rule, reckoned the distance, then stopped, having apparently finished his calculation, and struck upon a particular stone.

This was the identical stone struck by the Citizen Theodore in his fit of frantic rage.

"It is here, Citizen General," said the architect.

"You fancy so, Citizen Giraud."

Our concealed patriot so far forgot himself as to strike his thigh with his clinched fist, at the same time groaning deeply.

"I am positive," said Giraud; "and your examination, combined with my report, will prove to the Convention that I have not been deceived. Yes, Citizen General," continued the architect, with emphasis, "this stone opens upon a subterranean passage, terminating at the register-office, and passing below the cell of the Widow Capet. Let us raise the stone; descend with me into the vault, and I will convince you that two men, even one man, could effect a rescue in a single night, without any one suspecting it."

A murmur of terror and admiration, elicited by the architect's words, ran through the group, and faintly reached the Citizen Théodore, who seemed turned to stone.

"Look at the danger we run," continued Giraud. "Well, now with a grating which I shall place in the

middle of this underground passage before it reaches the cell of the Widow Capet, I shall save the country."

"Ah, Citizen Giraud!" said Santerre, "that is an idea bordering on the sublime."

"Perdition seize you, addle-pated fool!" grumbled the patriot, with redoubled fury.

"Now raise the stone," said the architect to the Citizen Gracchus, who in addition to a lantern carried a crowbar.

Gracchus set to work, and in a second the stone was raised.

The vault appeared open, with the staircase lost in its profundity, while the moist air escaped like a pestilent vapor.

"Another abortive attempt," murmured the Citizen Theodore. "Alas! Heaven does not will that she should escape, and her cause must be accursed!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE CITIZEN GRACCHUS.

For an instant the three men remained motionless at the entrance to the vault, while the turnkey plunged his lantern into the opening without being able to penetrate its depth. The architect triumphantly exulted over his companions from the summit of his genius.

"Well!" said he, at length.

"Faith! yes," replied Santerre, "here incontestably is the passage. It only remains to know where it leads to."

"Yes," repeated Richard, "it remains to know that."

"Well, then, descend yourself, Citizen Richard, and then you will see if I have told you the truth."

"I have something better to do than go in there," said the porter. "We will return with you and the general to the Conciergerie. There you can raise the hearthstone, and we shall see."

"Very well," said Santerre, "we will return."

"But we must be careful," said the architect; "this stone remaining unclosed may suggest an idea to some one."

"Who the devil do you imagine ever comes here at this hour?" said Santerre.

"Besides," said Richard, "the hall is deserted, and to leave Gracchus here is sufficient. Remain here, Citizen Gracchus, and we will return to you from the other side of the subterranean passage."

"All right," said Gracchus.

"Are you armed?" demanded Santerre.

"I have my sword and this crowbar, Citizen General."

"Just the thing! keep strict watch; in ten minutes we will be with you."

And having closed the iron gate, the three took their departure by the Gallery des Merciers, to repair to the private entrance of the Conciergerie.

The turnkey watched their receding footsteps, and followed them with his eyes as far as he could see, and listened as long as he had anything to hear; then all relapsed into silence, and supposing himself in perfect solitude, he placed his lantern on the ground, sat down, his legs overhanging the depths of the vault, and began to meditate. Turnkeys meditate sometimes; but people, generally speaking, do not trouble themselves to find out what is the subject of their meditations.

All at once, in the midst of his profound revery, he felt a hand press heavily upon his shoulder. He turned round, and attempted, on seeing a stranger, to give the alarm, but at the same instant the cold point of a pistol was pressed to his forehead.

The accents were arrested in his throat, his arms fell listlessly by his side, and his eyes assumed the most suppliant expression.

"Not a word," said the intruder, "or you are a dead man."

"What do you want, sir?" stammered the turnkey.

Even in '93, there were moments when, renouncing their idea of universal equality, they forgot to address each other as "Citizen."

"I wish," said the Citizen Théodore, "to be allowed to go down there."

"What for?"

"Never mind."

The turnkey regarded the person who had proffered this request with the most profound astonishment; but in the mean time his interlocutor fancied he detected in the man's look a ray of intelligence.

He lowered the pistol.

"Would you refuse to make your fortune?"

"I don't know. Hitherto no one has ever made me proposals on the subject."

"Well, then, I will begin."

"You offer to make my fortune?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean by a fortune?"

"Fifty thousand golden francs, for instance. Money is scarce, and fifty thousand francs now are worth a million. Well, I offer you that sum."

"To allow you to go down there?"

"Yes; but on condition that you come with me, and afford me your assistance in my undertaking."

"But what are you going to do? In five minutes that vault will be filled with soldiers, who will arrest you."

The Citizen Théodore was forcibly struck by this argument.

"Cannot you prevent the soldiers from descending there?"

"I have no means of so doing, I know none, and cannot think of any."

Indeed, it was evident the turnkey was taxing all his mental energies to discover some means of winning the fifty thousand francs.

"But," demanded the Citizen Théodore, "could we not enter to-morrow?"

"Yes; but to-morrow a grate of iron will be placed across the passage, occupying its whole width; and for the

greater security it is arranged that this partition should be entirely solid, and without even a door."

"Then we must think of something else," said Théodore.

"Yes; we must find some other way," said the turnkey.

It will be seen from the joint manner in which Gracchus expressed himself, that an alliance had already been struck between himself and the Citizen Théodore.

"That will be my concern," said Théodore. "What do you do at the Conciergerie?"

"I am a turnkey."

"What are your duties?"

"I open the doors and shut them."

"Do you sleep there?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you take your meals there?"

"Not always. I have my hours of recreation."

"And then?"

"I avail myself of them."

"What to do?"

"To pay my respects to the mistress of a tavern called Noah's Well, who has promised to marry me when I am possessed of twelve hundred francs."

"Where is the tavern Noah's Well?"

"Near the Rue de la Vieille-Draperie."

"Very well."

"Hush, sir."

The patriot listened.

"Ah! ah!" said he.

"Do you hear?"

"Yes. Voices and footsteps."

"They are returning."

"You see very well that we should not have had time."

This *we* was becoming more and more pronounced.

"That is true. You are a brave fellow, Citizen, and are through me predestined —"

"To what?"

"To be rich one day."

"God grant it!"

"You then still believe in God?"

"Sometimes; here and there. To-day, for example —"

"Well?"

"I should willingly believe."

"Believe, then," said the Citizen Théodore, putting ten louis into the man's hand.

"The devil!" said he, regarding the gold by the light of the lantern. "Is it, then, serious?"

"It could not be more so."

"What must I do?"

"Meet me to-morrow at Noah's Well; I will then tell you what I require of you. What is your name?"

"Gracchus."

"Well, Citizen Gracchus, get yourself dismissed from here to-morrow by the keeper Richard."

"Dismissed! give up my place!"

"Do you reckon on remaining a turnkey, with fifty thousand francs?"

"No, but being a turnkey and poor, I am certain of not being guillotined."

"Certain?"

"Or nearly so; while being free and rich —"

"You will hide your money, and make love to a spinster instead of to the mistress of Noah's Well."

"Well, then, it is settled."

"To-morrow at the tavern."

"At what hour?"

"At six in the evening."

"Flee quickly; there they are. I tell you to be quick,

because, I presume, you descend and go through the vaults."

"To-morrow," repeated Théodore, hastening away.

And not before it was time, for the voices and steps drew near, and lights were already seen approaching in the obscurity of the underground passage. Theodore gained the gate which the writer from whom he had taken the hut had shown him, opened the lock with his crowbar, reached the window, threw it open, dropped softly into the street, and found himself upon the pavement of the Republic once again.

Before quitting the Salle des Pas-Perdus he heard the Citizen Gracchus again question Richard, and also his reply.

"The Citizen Architect was quite right; the vault passes below the chamber of the Widow Capet, and it was dangerous."

"I well believe it," said Gracchus, who in this instance told the perfect truth.

Santerre reappeared at the opening of the staircase.

"And the workmen, Citizen Architect?" demanded he of Giraud.

"Before daybreak they will be here; and during the session the grating will be placed," replied a voice which seemed to proceed from the bowels of the earth.

"And you will have saved the country," cried Santerre, half in jest, half in earnest.

"You little know the truth of what you say, Citizen General," murmured Gracchus.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ROYAL CHILD.

In the mean time, as we have seen in the chapter preceding, the queen's trial was about to take place.

It was already surmised that by the sacrifice of this illustrious head the popular hatred, so long displayed in murmurs, would at length be satisfied.

The means were not wanting for the completion of this tragedy; and in the mean time Fouquier Tinville, that fatal accuser, had resolved not to neglect the new mode of accusation which Simon had promised to place in his hands.

The day after he and Simon had met in the Salle des Pas-Perdus, the noise of arms again startled the prisoners who remained in the Temple.

These prisoners were Madame Elizabeth, Madame Royale, and the child who after having been called "Your Majesty" in his cradle, was now styled simply the "Little Capet."

General Hanriot, with his tricolored plume, his splendid horse, and long sword, followed by several of the National Guard, dismounted, and entered the dungeon where the royal child languished.

By the general's side walked a registrar of very unprepossessing appearance, carrying a writing-desk, a large roll of paper, and flourishing a pen of immoderate length.

Behind the scribe walked the public accuser. We have seen, we know, and shall meet again at a later period, this dry, jaundiced, cold man, with his bloodshot eyes, who made the ferocious Santerre himself tremble, even when cased in his armor.

Several National Guards and a lieutenant followed them.

Simon, smiling hypocritically, and holding his bear-skin bonnet in one hand and his shoemaker's stirrup in the other, walked before to show the committee the way.

They came to a very dirty chamber, spacious and ill-furnished, at the end of which, seated upon his bed, was the young Louis, in a state of perfect immobility.

When we saw the poor child fleeing from the brutal anger of Simon, he still retained a species of vitality, resenting the unworthy treatment of the shoemaker of the Temple. He fled, he wept, he prayed; then he feared and suffered, but still he hoped.

But now both fear and hope had vanished; without doubt the suffering still existed, but if it still remained, the infant martyr, whom they had made pay after so cruel a fashion for his parents' faults, buried it in the depths of his heart, and veiled it under an appearance of total insensibility. He did not even raise his head when the commissioners walked up to him.

Without further ceremony they instantly installed themselves. The public accuser seated himself at the head of the bed, Simon at the foot, the registrar near the window, the National Guard and their lieutenant on the side and rather in the shade.

Those among them who regarded the little prisoner with the slightest interest, or even curiosity, remarked the child's pallor, his extraordinary stoutness (resulting

from his bloated condition), and his bent legs, the joints of which had already begun to swell.

"That child is very ill," said the lieutenant, with an assurance that caused Fouquier to turn round, though already seated and prepared to question his victim.

Little Capet raised his eyes to discover who had uttered these words, and recognized the same young man who had already once before saved him from Simon's cruelty in the court of the Temple. A sweet and intelligent glance shot from his deep blue eyes, and that was all.

"Ah, ah! is that you, Citizen Lorin?" said Simon, thus calling the attention of Fouquier Tinville to the friend of Maurice.

"Myself, Citizen Simon," said Lorin, with his usual nonchalance.

And as Lorin though always ready to face danger was not the man to seek it uselessly, he availed himself of this circumstance to bow to Fouquier Tinville, which salutation was politely returned.

"You observed, I think, Citizen," said the public accuser, "that the child was ill; are you a doctor?"

"I have studied medicine, at least, if I am not a medical man."

"Well, and what do you discover in him?"

"Symptoms of sickness, do you mean?" asked Lorin.

"Yes."

"I find his cheeks and eyes puffed up, his hands thin and white, his knees swollen; and were I to feel his pulse, I should certainly count eighty-five or ninety pulsations in a minute."

The child appeared insensible to the enumeration of his sufferings.

"And to what might science attribute the condition of the prisoner?"

Lorin rubbed the tip of his nose, murmuring, —

"Phyllis wants to make me speak,
I am not the least inclined.

"Faith, Citizen!" replied he, "I am not sufficiently acquainted with little Capet's constitution to reply. However—"

Simon lent an attentive ear, and laughed in his sleeve to find his enemy so near committing himself.

"However," said Lorin, "I think he does not have sufficient exercise."

"I believe the little scoundrel," said Simon, "does not choose to walk."

The child remained quite unmoved by this apostrophe of the shoemaker.

Fouquier Tinville arose, advanced to Lorin, and addressed some words to him in a low tone. No one heard the words, but it was evident they assumed the form of interrogatories.

"Oh, oh! do you believe that, Citizen? It is a serious charge for a mother —"

"Under any circumstances, we shall find out. Simon pretends he has heard him say so, and has engaged to make him acknowledge it."

"This would be frightful," said Lorin; "but indeed it is possible; the Austrian is not exempt from sin, and right or wrong, does not concern me— They have made her out a Messalina; but not content with that, they wish to make her an Agrippina. I must acknowledge it appears to me rather hard."

"This is what has been reported by Simon," said the impassible Fouquier.

"I do not doubt that Simon has said all this. There are some men who stick at nothing, even the most impos-

sible accusations. But do you not find," said Lorin, fixing his eyes steadily on Fouquier, — "do you not find — you, an intelligent and upright man, possessed with a strong mind — that to inquire of a child concerning such circumstances as those which all the most natural and most sacred laws of Nature command us to respect, is to insult all human nature in the person of a child?"

The accuser did not frown, but took a note from his pocket and showed it to Lorin.

"The Convention enjoins me to investigate," said he; "the rest does not concern me. I shall investigate."

"It is just," said Lorin; "and I declare that if this child acknowledges — " And the young man shook his head, expressive of disgust.

"Besides," continued Fouquier, "it is not only upon the denunciation of Simon that we proceed; the accusation is public."

And Fouquier drew a second paper from his pocket.

This was a number of the paper entitled "Le Père Duchesne;" which, as is well known, was written by Hébert.

The accusation indeed appeared there in full.

"It is written, and even printed," said Lorin; "but till I hear a similar accusation proceed from the lips of the child, — mind, I mean voluntarily, freely, and without menaces, — notwithstanding Simon and Hébert, I shall disbelieve it, as much as you in reality do yourself."

Simon impatiently awaited the issue of this conversation.

The miserable creature was not unaware of the power exercised upon an intelligent man by the looks which he receives from the crowd, expressive either of sympathy or subtle hatred. Sometimes this subtle influence repels, sometimes it attracts, makes the thought flow out and even draws the person of the man toward that other

man of equal or superior mental calibre whom he recognizes in the crowd.

But Fouquier Tinville had felt the keen observation of Lorin, and was anxious to be fully understood by him.

"The examination is about to commence," said the public accuser. "Registrar, resume your pen!"

The registrar, who had just drawn out the preliminaries of the investigation, was waiting, like Hanriot, Simon, and all the rest, till the colloquy between Fouquier and Lorin had ceased.

The child alone appeared perfectly unconscious of the scene in which he was soon to become the principal actor, and his face, which had for an instant gleamed with a ray of the highest intelligence, had relapsed into its listless, apathetic expression.

"Silence!" cried Hanriot, "the Citizen Fouquier Tinville is going to interrogate the child."

"Capet," said the public accuser, "do you know what has become of your mother?"

The little Louis turned from an ashy paleness to a brilliant red, but made no reply.

"Did you hear me, Capet?"

He still remained silent.

"Oh, he hears well enough," said Simon, "only he is like the ape, he will not reply for fear he should be taken for a man, and so made to work."

"Reply, Capet!" said Hanriot; "it is the Commission of the Convention that interrogates you. You must show obedience to the laws."

The child turned pale, but did not reply.

Simon made a frantic gesture of rage. With natures so stupid and brutal as his, anger becomes an intoxication, attended with all the loathsome symptoms of alcoholic inebriety.

"Will you reply, wolf's cub?" showing him the strap.

"Be quiet, Simon," said Fouquier Tinville; "you have not the right to speak."

This expression, which had become habitual to Tinville at the Revolutionary Tribunal, now escaped him involuntarily.

"Do you hear, Simon?" said Lorin. "This is the second time you have been told this in my presence; the first was when you accused Tison's daughter, whom you had the pleasure of bringing to the scaffold."

Simon was silent.

"Does your mother love you, Capet?" asked Fouquier.

Still the same silence.

"They say not," continued the accuser.

Something like a ghastly smile passed over the child's pale lips.

"But then, I say," roared Simon, "he has told me she loves him too much!"

"Look here, Simon," said Lorin, "you are angry that the little Capet chatters so much when you are together, and remains silent before company to-day."

"Oh, if we were alone!" said Simon.

"Yes, if you were alone; but unfortunately you are not alone. Oh, if you were, brave Simon, excellent patriot! how you would belabor the poor child, eh? But you are not alone, and dare not show your rage before honest men like us who know that the ancients, whom we endeavor to take for our models, respected all who were weak. You dare not, for you are not alone; and you are not valiant, my worthy man, when you have children of five feet six inches to combat."

"Oh!" muttered Simon, grinding his teeth.

"Capet," said Fouquier, "have you confided any secrets to Simon?"

The child never turned round, but his face assumed an expression of irony impossible to describe.

"About your mother?" continued Fouquier.

A look of supreme contempt passed over his countenance.

"Reply, yes or no!" cried Hanriot.

"Say yes!" roared Simon, holding his leather stirrup over the child's head.

The child shuddered, but made no movement to avoid the blow. Those present uttered a cry expressive of their disgust. Lorin did more. Before the wretch could lower his arm he darted forward and seized him by the wrist.

"Will you let me go?" roared Simon, purple with rage.

"Come, there is no harm," said Fouquier, "in a mother loving her child. Tell us in what way your mother loved you, Capet. It may be useful to her."

The young prisoner started at the idea of being useful to his mother.

"She loves me as a mother loves her son, sir," said he; "there are not two ways for mothers to love their sons, or sons to love their mothers."

"And I, little serpent, declare that you have told me your mother — "

"You have dreamed that," interrupted Lorin, quietly, "you must often have the nightmare, Simon."

"Lorin! Lorin!" growled Simon, grinding his teeth.

"Yes, again, Lorin. There is no way of beating Lorin, since he chastises the wicked; there is no way to denounce him for what he did in arresting your arm, as it was done before General Hanriot and Fouquier Tinville, who approve of it, and they are not lukewarm in the cause. There is then no way to bring him to the guil-

lotine, as you did poor Héloïse Tison. It is very grievous, very vexatious, very enraging; still it is so, my poor Simon!"

"Later! later!" replied the shoemaker, with his mocking laugh.

"Yes, dear friend," said Lorin, "I hope with the help of the Supreme Being — Ah! you expected I was going to say with the help of God! But I hope with the assistance of the Supreme Being, and my good sword, to disembowel you first; but move aside, Simon, you prevent me from seeing."

"Rascal!"

"Be silent, you prevent me from hearing," and Lorin silenced him with a threatening look.

Simon clinched his black hands and shook his fists, but as Lorin had told him, he was obliged to confine himself to these manifestations.

"Now he has begun to speak," said Hanriot, "he will continue no doubt. Go on, Fouquier!"

"Will you reply now?" demanded Fouquier.

The child returned to his former silence.

"You see, Citizen! you see!" exclaimed Simon.

"The obstinacy of this child is strange," said Hanriot, troubled in spite of himself at this royal firmness.

"He is ill advised," said Lorin.

"By whom?" demanded Hanriot.

"By his guardian."

"Do you accuse me?" cried Simon, — "do you denounce me? Ah! that is curious —"

"Let us try gentleness," said Fouquier. Then turning toward the child, whom one would have supposed to be insensible, —

"My child," said he, "reply to the National Commission; do not aggravate your situation by refusing us any

useful information. You have spoken to the Citizen Simon about your mother, — how you caress her and love her; how she caresses and loves you?"

Louis threw a glance around the assembly, which gleamed with hatred when it rested on Simon, but he did not reply.

"Do you feel yourself unhappy?" demanded the accuser; "are you uncomfortably lodged, badly fed, and unkindly treated? Would you wish more liberty, better food, another prison, another guardian? Would you like a horse to ride upon, and some companions of your own age?"

Louis still maintained the profound silence he had only once broken, to defend his mother.

The Commission was utterly confounded at so much firmness and intelligence evinced by a child.

"Ah, these kings!" said Hanriot, in a low voice, "what a race! They are like tigers; even the young ones inherit their wickedness."

"How are we to write the investigation?" asked the registrar, much embarrassed.

"There is no charge against Simon; there is nothing to write," said Lorin; "that will suit him exactly."

Simon again shook his fist at his implacable enemy.

Lorin began to laugh.

"You will not laugh like that the day you will sneeze in the sack," said Simon, drunk with fury.

"I do not know whether I shall precede or follow you in the little ceremony you menace me with," said Lorin; "but this I do know, that many will laugh when your turn comes. Gods! — I have spoken in the plural, — gods! you will not be ugly then, Simon; you will be hideous."

And Lorin retired behind the Commission, with a fresh burst of laughter.

The Commission, having nothing more to attend to, withdrew.

As for the poor child, released from his tormentors, he began to sing a little melancholy ditty which had been a great favorite of his father.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BOUQUET OF VIOLETS.

As might be foreseen, the felicity of Geneviève and Maurice was not of long continuance.

In the tempest which unchains the wind and hurls the thunderbolt, the nest of the doves is shaken in the tree where they had retired for shelter.

Geneviève passed from one terror to another. She no longer feared for Maison-Rouge, she now trembled for Maurice.

She knew her husband sufficiently well to feel convinced, the moment of his disappearance, that he was saved; but sure of his safety, she thought now of her own.

She dared not confide her grief to the least timid man of this epoch when all from desperation were devoid of fear, but it was plainly evinced by her red eyes and pallid cheeks.

One day Maurice softly entered, so quietly indeed that Geneviève, buried in a profound revery, did not notice his entrance. He stopped upon the threshold and saw Geneviève sitting immovable, her eyes fixed on vacancy, her hands lying listlessly on her lap, her head hanging pensively upon her bosom.

He gazed at her for a moment with an expression of deepest sadness, for all that was passing in the young girl's heart was suddenly revealed, as if he had read even to her latest thought. He stepped up to her.

"You have ceased to care for France, Geneviève; confess it is so. You fly from the air breathed here, and not without the greatest reluctance will you even approach the window."

"Alas!" said Geneviève, "I know I cannot conceal my thoughts from you, Maurice; you have divined rightly."

"It is nevertheless a fine country," said the young man; "life is here important, and well occupied now. This bustling activity of the Tribune, the clubs, the conspiracies, renders sweeter the hours spent by our own fireside. One loves it the more ardently, it may be, from the fear of not being able to love it on the morrow, for on the morrow one may have ceased to exist."

Geneviève shook her head. "An ungrateful country to serve," said she.

"Why so?"

"Yes; you who have labored so much for the cause of liberty, are you not to-day more than half suspected?"

"But you, dear Geneviève," said Maurice, with a look replete with tenderness, "you a sworn enemy to this liberty, — you who have done so much against it! You yet sleep, peaceable and inviolate, beneath the roof of a Republican; and there, you see, is my recompense."

"Yes," said Geneviève, "but that cannot last long; that which is wrong cannot endure."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean to say that I, — that is to say an aristocrat, — that I who dream quietly of the defeat of your party and the ruin of your plans; I who plot, even in your house, the return of the ancient régime; I who, recognized, would condemn you to death and dishonor, according to your opinions at least, — I, Maurice, will not remain here as the evil genius of your house; I will not drag you to the scaffold."

"And where will you go, Geneviève?"

"Where shall I go, Maurice? One day when you are out I shall go and denounce myself, without saying where I come from."

"Oh!" cried Maurice, wounded to the heart's core, "already ungrateful?"

"No," cried the young woman, throwing her arms round Maurice's neck; "it is love, and the most devoted love, I swear. I should not wish my brother to be taken and slaughtered as a rebel; I do not wish my lover to be arrested and guillotined as a traitor."

"And you will do this, Geneviève?"

"As truly as there is a God in heaven," replied the young woman; "besides, I not only experience fear but remorse," and she bowed her head as if remorse were a burden too heavy to be borne.

"Oh, Geneviève!" said Maurice.

"You will understand all that I say, all that I feel, Maurice, for you yourself experience this remorse. You know I gave myself to you while I belonged to another, and you have taken me without my possessing the right to dispose of myself."

"Enough!" said Maurice, "enough!" He knit his brow, and a melancholy resolution shone in his clear bright eyes. "I will show you, Geneviève, how entirely I love you," said the young man, "I will prove to you that no sacrifice is beyond my love. You hate France. Well, so be it. We will quit France."

Geneviève clasped her hands, and regarded her lover with enthusiastic admiration.

"You will not deceive me, Maurice," murmured she.

"Have I ever deceived you?" asked Maurice, "and is this the time when, to obtain you, I have dishonored myself?"

Geneviève approached her lips to Maurice's, and remained hanging on the neck of her lover.

"Yes, you are right," said Geneviève; "it is I who am mistaken. What I feel is not remorse, perhaps it is a degradation of soul; but you will comprehend at least I love you far too much to feel any other emotion than the all-engrossing one, the fear of losing you. Let us go far away, Maurice, let us go far away where no one can ever reach us."

"Oh, thanks!" said Maurice, transported with joy.

"But how can we flee?" said Geneviève, trembling at the hazard. "It is not so easy to escape nowadays from the poniard of the assassins of the 2d of September, or the hatchet of the executioners of the 21st of January."

"Geneviève," said Maurice, "God will protect us. Listen to me! A good action which I endeavored to perform, on that very 2d of September which you have just named, is now about to receive its reward. I wished to save a poor priest who had studied with me. I went to Danton, and at his request the Committee of Public Safety signed a passport for the unfortunate man and his sister. This passport Danton forwarded to me; but the unfortunate priest, instead of coming to my house for it, as I had advised him to do, went and shut himself up with the Carmelites, from whom he was taken and killed."

"And the passport?" asked Geneviève.

"I have it now. It is worth a million. It is worth more than that, Geneviève, — it comprises both life and happiness!"

"Oh, God be praised!" cried the young woman.

"Now, my property, as you are aware, consists of an estate managed by an old servant of the family, a stanch patriot, and strictly loyal, in whom we may confide. He

will send remittances whenever I wish. On arriving at Boulogne, we will go to his house."

"Where does he reside then?"

"At Abbeville."

"When shall we go, Maurice?"

"Within an hour."

"No one need know of our departure."

"No one will know it. I will run to Lorin; he has a cabriolet and no horse, while I have a horse and no carriage. We will set out immediately on my return. Remain you here, Geneviève, and prepare everything for our departure. We want but little luggage; we can purchase all that we require in England. I shall give Scævola some commission that will remove him out of the way. Lorin will explain our departure to him this evening. By that time we shall be far away."

"But if we should be arrested upon the road?"

"Have we not our passport? We shall go to Hubert's house, — that is the steward's name. Hubert is a member of the town council of Abbeville; from Abbeville to Boulogne he will accompany us as safeguard. At Boulogne we will purchase and freight a vessel. I could, besides, proceed to the Committee, and make them give me a mission to Abbeville. But no; we shall use no fraud, Geneviève. It is better to risk our lives to save and secure our happiness."

"Yes, yes, dear Maurice; and we shall succeed. But how you are perfumed this morning!" said the young woman, concealing her face on Maurice's breast.

"True; I purchased a bunch of violets for you this morning, passing before the Palace d'Egalité; but on my return, finding you so sad, I thought of nothing but inquiring into the cause of your distress."

"Oh, give it to me; I will return it."

Geneviève inhaled the odor of the bouquet with that intense delight which persons of nervous organization always experience from the perfume of flowers. Suddenly her eyes suffused with tears.

"What is the matter?" asked Maurice.

"Poor Héloïse!" murmured Geneviève.

"Ah, yes!" said Maurice, with a sigh; "but let us think of ourselves, and leave the dead, wherever they may be, to rest in the grave dug by their devotion. Adieu! I am going."

"Return quickly."

"In less than half an hour I shall be here again."

"But if Lorin is not at home?"

"What does it matter? his servant knows me. And even in his absence I can take what I please, as he would do here in mine."

"Very well."

"Now, my Geneviève, prepare everything; but, as I have told you, confine yourself to necessaries. I do not wish our departure to appear like a removal."

The young man advanced a step toward the door.

"Maurice!" said Geneviève.

He turned round, and saw the young woman extend her arms toward him.

"Good-by for the present, dear love," said he; "in half an hour I shall be here."

Geneviève remained alone, occupied, as we have said, in preparations for their departure.

She accomplished her task in feverish haste. As long as she remained in Paris, the part she was acting appeared to her doubly culpable. Once out of France, once among strangers, it seemed that her crime — a crime rather of fatality than her own — would weigh the less heavily on her conscience.

She even hoped, isolated and in solitude, she might at last forget the existence of any other man than Maurice.

They would fly to England; everything was arranged. There they would hire a little cottage, standing alone, very retired, shut out from all eyes; they would change their names, and instead of two names would have one.

There they would have two servants who would be perfectly ignorant of their past. Fortunately, both Geneviève and Maurice spoke English.

Neither of them left anything to regret in France, save that mother whom one always regrets, even when she is only a step-mother, — one's country. Geneviève commenced, then, making preparations for their voyage, or rather flight.

She took singular pleasure in selecting from the rest those objects for which Maurice had evinced any predilection. The coat setting off his tall figure to advantage, the cravat and waistcoat best suited to his complexion, the books whose leaves he had most frequently turned.

She had already made her selection. Clothes, linen, and books, waiting to be packed, strewed the floor, the chairs, the sofa and the piano.

Suddenly she heard the key turn in the lock.

"Why, Scævola has returned," said she; "surely Maurice could not have met him."

And she continued her occupation.

The doors of the salon were open, and she heard Scævola moving in the antechamber. She held a roll of music in her hand, and was looking for some string to tie round it.

"Scævola!" cried she.

An approaching step sounded in the adjoining room.

"Scævola!" repeated Geneviève, "do come here, please!"

"I am here," said a voice.

At the sound of this voice Geneviève turned quickly round, and uttered a terrified cry.

"My husband!" cried she.

"Himself," said Dixmer, coolly.

Geneviève was upon a chair, searching for some string in the wardrobe. She felt her head turn round, and extending her arms, fell backward, wishing she could precipitate herself into an abyss beneath.

Dixmer took her in his arms, and carried her to a sofa.

"What is the matter, my dear? What is it? My presence seems to have produced a most disagreeable effect upon you."

"I am dying," murmured Geneviève, turning from him, and pressing both hands over her eyes that she might shut out the frightful apparition.

"What!" said Dixmer, "did you believe me dead, my dear, and do you take me for a ghost?"

Geneviève looked round her with a bewildered air, when, perceiving the portrait of Maurice, she glided from the sofa and fell upon her knees, as if to implore the assistance of this powerless and insensible image, which still continued to smile.

The unhappy woman fully comprehended the menaces concealed by Dixmer under his affected calmness.

"Oh, my dear child," continued the master-tanner, "it is indeed myself. Perhaps you thought I was far from Paris; but no, I remained here. The day after I had left the house, I returned, and found in its stead a heap of ruins. I inquired after you. No one had seen you. I then commenced a search for you, and have had

much trouble to find you. I avow that I did not think you were here; however, I had my suspicions. So, as you see, I came. So here I am; and there are you. And how is dear Maurice? Indeed, I fear you have suffered much. You so stanch a Royalist, compelled to seek shelter under the roof of so fanatical a Republican."

"My God! my God!" murmured Geneviève, "take pity upon me!"

"After all, my dear," continued Dixmer, "what serves to console me most is that you are so comfortably lodged here, and that you do not appear to have suffered much from the proscription. As for myself, since the burning of our house, and the ruin of our fortune, I have had my share of wandering adventures, sometimes living in caves, sometimes in boats, and sometimes even in the common sewers which empty into the Seine."

"Sir!" said Geneviève.

"You have there some beautiful fruit; as for me, I have often gone without any dessert, not having had any dinner."

Geneviève, sobbing bitterly, supported her head between her hands.

"Not," continued Dixmer, "that I was destitute of money. I have, thank God! generally carried with me thirty thousand francs in gold, which at this time is worth five hundred thousand francs; but how should a 'collier,' a 'fisherman,' or a 'rag merchant' draw louis from his pocket to purchase a morsel of cheese or a sausage. Eh! my God! yes, Madame, I have successively adopted these three costumes. To-day, the better to disguise myself, I am dressed as a patriot of the patriots; I lisp, and I swear. An outlaw cannot conceal himself so easily in Paris as a young and pretty woman, and I

have not the happiness of knowing an ardent young female Republican who could hide me from every eye."

"Sir! sir!" cried Geneviève, "have mercy upon me! you see that I am dying."

"Anxiety; I can understand you have had much anxiety about me; but console yourself, you see me now. I have returned, and we shall part no more, Madame."

"Oh, you will kill me!" cried Geneviève.

Dixmer regarded her with a frightful smile.

"Kill an innocent woman! Oh, Madame, what makes you say so? It must be that grief for my absence has turned your brain."

"Sir!" cried Geneviève, "sir, I beseech you to kill me at once, rather than torture me with these cruel railleries. No, I am not innocent; yes, I am criminal; yes, I merit death. Kill me, sir, kill me!—"

"Then you acknowledge that you merit death?"

"Yes! yes!"

"And to expiate this I know not what crime of which you accuse yourself, you will submit to death without complaint?"

"Strike, sir, I will not utter a cry; and instead of cursing I will bless the hand that strikes me."

"No, Madame, I do not wish to strike you; nevertheless in all probability you will die. Only your death, instead of being as you seem to fear an ignominious one, shall be most glorious. Thank me, Madame; while punishing, I will immortalize you."

"What then will you do, sir?"

"You will follow the end to which we were tending when interrupted on our route. In your own eyes and in mine, you will die guilty; in the eyes of the world you will die a martyr."

"Oh, my God! you will drive me mad by speaking thus. Where are you conducting me? Where are you dragging me?"

"In all probability to death."

"Let me then offer up one prayer."

"To whom?"

"It matters not to you. The moment you deprive me of life, my debt is cancelled. My debt paid, I owe you nothing."

"True," said Dixmer, retiring into another room; "I will await you." And he left her once more alone.

Geneviève sank on her knees before the portrait, pressing her hands against her breaking heart.

"Maurice," said she, in a low tone, "pardon me; I did not expect to be happy, but I hoped to make you so. Maurice, I am depriving you of a joy that constituted your life; pardon me for causing your death, my best beloved."

Then severing a ringlet from her mass of curls, she bound it round the bouquet of violets, and placed them beneath the portrait, which insensible, and speechless as it was, still appeared to assume an expression of grief at her departure.

At least so it appeared to the unfortunate Geneviève, as she gazed at it through her tears.

"Well, are you ready, Madame?" demanded Dixmer.

"So soon?" murmured Geneviève.

"Oh, take your time, Madame," replied Dixmer; "I am in no hurry. Besides, I dare say Maurice will not be long, and I shall be delighted to thank him for all his kindness and hospitality toward you."

Geneviève trembled with terror at the idea of a meeting between her lover and husband. She automatically raised herself.

"It is finished, sir," said she, "and I am ready now."

Dixmer went out first, and the trembling Geneviève followed him with half-closed eyes, her head turned back to take a last fond look. They ascended the carriage which was waiting at the door. It rolled away.

As Geneviève had said, "It was finished."

CHAPTER XL.

THE TAVERN OF NOAH'S WELL.

This man attired in a jerkin, whom we have seen traversing with long and rapid strides the Salle des Pas-Perdus; whom we have heard, during the expedition of the architect Giraud, General Hanriot, and Richard, conversing with the turnkey left to guard the subterranean passage; this fierce patriot, who had introduced himself to Simon as having carried the head of the Princess de Lamballe, — found himself, on the next evening, about seven o'clock, at the tavern of Noah's Well, situated, as we have said, at the corner of the Rue de la Vieille Draperie.

He was seated at the end of a dirty room, redolent of tobacco and candles, pretending to devour a plate of fish swimming in melted butter.

The room where he supped was nearly deserted; two or three habitués of the house alone remained after the rest, enjoying the privilege to which their daily visit to the establishment entitled them.

The tables were for the most part empty; but we ought to remark, in honor to the tavern of Noah's Well, that the stained tablecloths denoted the departure of a satisfactory number of satisfied guests.

The last three successively disappeared, and at about a quarter to eight our patriot found himself alone. Then, with true aristocratic disgust, he pushed away the greasy plate, which an instant before he had appeared to think

so delicious, and drew from his pocket a tablet of Spanish chocolate, which he ate slowly and with a very different expression to that we have seen him endeavor to give to his countenance.

From time to time, while eating his chocolate and black bread, he cast toward a glass door, shaded by a red and white checked curtain, anxious and impatient glances. Sometimes he interrupted his frugal repast to listen; in short, evinced an absence of mind sufficient to induce the mistress of the mansion — seated at her counter, and near the door on which the patriot so eagerly fixed his eyes — to conclude that she might without vanity consider herself the object of his preoccupation.

At length the door-bell sounded in a way that made him start; he drew the plate again before him, and without attracting the woman's observation, threw half the contents to a famished-looking dog, and the remainder to a cat, who treated the dog to some stinging strokes of her velvet paws.

The door opened, and a man entered, dressed almost the same as the patriot, with the exception of the hairy cap, which he had replaced with the red bonnet. An enormous bunch of keys hung from his girdle, from which also depended a sword.

"My soup! my half-pint!" cried the man, entering the public room without removing his bonnet, but merely saluting the mistress of the house by a slight inclination of his head. With a sigh of fatigue, he seated himself at a table adjoining that where our patriot was discussing his black bread and chocolate.

The mistress of the tavern, in consequence of the deference she entertained for the new-comer, rose herself to order the requisite viands.

The two men turned their backs to each other, — one to look into the street, the other toward the end of the room, — not a word was exchanged between them till the mistress of the tavern had disappeared.

When the door had closed behind her, by the light from a single candle, suspended from the end of an iron wire so as to divide the light equally between the two guests, the man in the bear-skin bonnet — thanks to the glass placed before him — at length saw that the room was deserted.

"Good-evening," said he to his companion, without turning round.

"Good-evening, sir!" said the new-comer.

"Well," asked the patriot, with the same affected indifference, "where are we now?"

"Well! it is done!"

"What is done?"

"As we agreed, I have had some conversation with Father Richard about the situation. I complained of swimming in the head, dimness of eyesight, — in short, of general ill-health."

"What then?"

"Father Richard called his wife, and she rubbed my temples with vinegar, and that revived me. Then, as we had arranged between us, I said that want of fresh air produced this swimming in the head, that I was of too full a habit, and that the duty at the Conciergerie, which contains at the present moment four hundred prisoners, was killing me."

"What did they say to that?"

"Richard's wife pitied me, but he showed me to the door."

"It was not enough to show you to the door."

"But wait! Then his wife, who is a good soul, re-

proached him with having no heart, seeing that I was the father of a family."

"What did he say to that?"

"He said that she was right; but that the very first condition annexed to the situation of turnkey was to remain within the prison to which he was attached; that the Republic did not jest, but would without ceremony cut the throats of those who grew dizzy in the exercise of their duty."

"The devil!" exclaimed the patriot.

"And he was not far wrong either; for since the Austrian has been there, it is a perfect hell of surveillance. One would act the spy there upon his own father." The patriot here gave his plate to the dog to lick, who was directly bitten by the cat.

"Go on!" said he, without turning round.

"At last, sir, I began to groan, and to say that I felt very ill; asked concerning the infirmary, and said I was certain my children would die of hunger if my pay was stopped."

"And Father Richard?"

"The Father Richard replied that turnkeys had no business with children."

"But you had his wife on your side, I suppose?"

"Fortunately! She made a great to-do with her husband, reproached him with possessing a bad and hard heart, and Richard finished by saying to me, —

"'Well! Citizen Gracchus, speak to some one of your friends who will advance you something on your wages, present him to me, and I promise to accept him as your substitute.' Upon which I left him, saying, —

"'Very good, Father Richard, I will directly seek one.'"

"And you have found one, my brave fellow."

At this moment the mistress of the establishment entered, bringing the Citizen Gracchus his soup and half-pint.

This did not suit either the patriot or Gracchus, who evidently had still some communications to make to each other.

"Madame," said the turnkey, "I have received a slight remuneration from Father Richard to-day, which will permit me to treat myself to some better fare. So bring me a pork cutlet with cucumbers and a bottle of Burgundy wine; send your servant to fetch the one from the pork-butcher's, and bring me the other yourself fresh from the cellar."

The hostess immediately went to execute his orders.

"Well," said the patriot, "you are an intelligent fellow."

"So far intelligent that I do not hide from myself what, notwithstanding all your fine promises, will be the end of us both. Do you suspect what it may be?"

"Yes, perfectly."

"We both stake our necks."

"Do not be uneasy about mine."

"It is not yours, sir, I must confess, that causes me the greatest uneasiness."

"It is your own?"

"Yes."

"But what if I estimate it at double its worth?"

"Ah, sir, there is nothing more precious than one's neck!"

"Not yours."

"Why not mine?"

"At this moment at least."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean to say your neck is not worth a cent, seeing

that if I, for example, were an agent of the Committee of Public Safety, you would be guillotined to-morrow."

The turnkey suddenly turned round so abruptly that the dog barked at him.

He was as pale as death.

"Neither turn round nor turn pale about it," said the patriot, "but finish your soup quietly. I am not an agent, friend. Let me once enter the Conciergerie, install me in your situation, give me the keys, and to-morrow I will count out to you fifty thousand francs in gold."

"Is all this true?"

"Well, you have excellent security, — my head."

The turnkey considered for some seconds.

"Come," said the patriot, who could see him in the glass, "do not indulge in meditations of evil. If you denounce me, as you will only have done your duty, you will not receive a sou from the Republic; if you serve me, and on the contrary are deficient in this same duty to the Republic, as it is unjust in this world to do anything for nothing, I will give you fifty thousand francs."

"I understand perfectly," said the turnkey. "I have every inducement to do what you require, but I fear the results — "

"The results! And what have you to fear? I will not denounce you; very far from it."

"No doubt."

"The day after I am duly installed, take a turn through the Conciergerie, and I will count you twenty-five rolls each containing two thousand francs. These you can easily dispose of in your two pockets. With the money I will give you a ticket to leave France. You go, and wherever you are you will be, if not rich, at least independent."

"Well! it is settled, Monsieur, happen what may. I am a poor devil who never dabbled in politics. France has always got on very well without me, and will not perish through any fault of mine; if you do a wicked action so much the worse for you."

"At all events," said the patriot, "I think I shall never do worse than they are doing at this moment."

"Sir, permit me to decline passing an opinion upon the politics of the National Convention."

"You are a pattern of philosophy and indifference. When, however, will you present me to Father Richard?"

"This evening, if you please."

"Yes, certainly; but who am I?"

"My cousin Mardoche."

"Mardoche, then, let it be; the name pleases me. What trade?"

"A breeches-maker."

"Either breeches-maker or tanner. I have that at my fingers' ends."

"Are you a tanner?"

"I could be one."

"True."

"At what time will you present me?"

"In half an hour if you like."

"At nine o'clock then."

"When shall I have the money?"

"To-morrow."

"You must be enormously rich."

"I am in easy circumstances."

"A former nobleman? Is it not so?"

"What does it matter to you?"

"To possess money, and give it away to run the risk of being guillotined; surely the former nobility must be great blockheads."

"What would you have? Your red Republicans have too much sense to leave any for others."

"Hush! here is my wine."

"This evening, in front of the Conciergerie."

"All right."

The patriot paid his bill and went out. At the door his stentorian voice was heard, —

"Come, Citizen, quick! make haste with the pork cutlets; my cousin Gracchus is dying of hunger!"

"Mardoche is a good fellow," said the turnkey, tasting the wine poured out for him by the hostess, while she regarded him tenderly.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE REGISTRAR OF THE MINISTER OF WAR.

THE patriot left, but he had not gone far. Through the smoky panes he kept watch over the turnkey, to discover if he entered into conversation with any of the agents of the Republican police, one of the best that ever existed, since one half of society closely watched the other, less from the desire of promoting the great glory of the government than for the greater security of their own heads.

But nothing occurred of what the patriot feared. At a few minutes before nine the turnkey rose, chucked the hostess under the chin, and went out.

The patriot rejoined him at the quay of the Conciergerie, and they entered the prison together.

On that same evening the affair was concluded, and Father Richard accepted Mardoche as a substitute for Gracchus.

Two hours before this arrangement took place, another scene had been enacted in a different part of the prison, which, although apparently of no interest, was possessed of vital importance to the principal personages of this history.

The registrar of the Conciergerie, fatigued with his day's labor, was folding up his papers and preparing to leave, when a man, conducted by Madame Richard, presented himself in his office.

"Citizen Registrar," said she, "here is your fellow registrar of the Minister of War, who comes on the part of the Citizen Minister to transfer some military entries."

"Ah, Citizen," said the registrar, "you are too late; I have just put away all my papers."

"Dear brother, pardon me," said the new-comer; "but we are really so overwhelmed with business that we can only achieve our course by turning our leisure to profit; and our leisure is the time occupied by others in eating and sleeping."

"That alters the case, my dear fellow; so make haste, for, as you observe, it is near supper-time, and I am very hungry. Have you your documents?"

"Here they are," said the registrar of the Minister of War, exhibiting a portfolio of papers which his brother, anxious as he was to leave, scrutinized with the strictest attention.

"Oh, they are all right!" said Richard's wife, "and my husband has already thoroughly inspected them."

"Never mind, never mind!" said the registrar, continuing his examination. The registrar of the Minister of War remained like a man who had expected the strict accomplishment of all due formalities.

"Perfectly correct," said the registrar of the Conciergerie; "and you can now commence as soon as you please. Have you many entries to transfer?"

"A hundred."

"That will occupy you for several days."

"Therefore dear brother, I wish to form a small establishment with you, — that is to say, if you will permit me."

"How am I to understand you?" said the registrar of the Conciergerie.

"I will explain it to you fully, if you will join us at supper this evening. You say you are hungry?"

"I do not deny it."

"Well, you shall see my wife, who is a good housekeeper; and you will become better acquainted with me, and will acknowledge me for a good companion."

"Faith, yes; you strike me as such, my dear brother; yet, notwithstanding —"

"Oh, come without ceremony, and partake of some oysters that I will purchase as I pass the Place du Châtelet, a roasted chicken, and a few dishes which Madame Durand excels in."

"You tempt me, my brother," said the registrar of the Conciergerie, delighted at the bill of fare, to which he was totally unaccustomed as a registrar paid by the Revolutionary Tribunal at the rate of two livres in paper money, in reality hardly equal to two francs.

"Then you will accept my invitation?"

"Yes, willingly."

"In that case, to work to-morrow; this evening let us go."

"All right; let us start."

"Are you ready?"

"In an instant, only I must first inform the gendarmes who guard the Austrian."

"Why must you tell them?"

"So that when they know that I am absent, and that there is no one at the wicket, they may become suspicious of every noise."

"Ah, that is a very wise precaution, faith!"

"You understand now?"

"Perfectly."

The registrar of the Conciergerie went and knocked at the wicket, which was opened by one of the gendarmes.

"Who is there?"

"I, the registrar, you know. I am going out. Good-evening, Citizen Gilbert."

"Good-evening, Citizen Registrar," and the wicket was shut.

The registrar of the Minister of War had paid the greatest attention to this scene, and while the door of the queen's prison remained open, his looks rapidly penetrated to the first compartment, when, seeing the other gendarme Duchesne seated at table, he felt perfectly assured the queen had only two guards.

When the registrar of the Conciergerie returned, his fellow registrar's face had resumed its expression of stolid indifference.

As they went out of the Conciergerie two men entered. They were the Citizen Gracchus and his cousin Mardoche.

On seeing each other, Cousin Mardoche and the registrar of the Minister of War each, by a simultaneous movement arising from the same impulse, pulled over their eyes, the one his hairy bonnet, the other his broad-brimmed hat.

"Who are these men?" asked the registrar of the Minister of War.

"I only know one of them; it is a turnkey named Gracchus."

"Ah!" said the other, with affected indifference, "do the turnkeys then go out of the Conciergerie?"

"They have their day."

The investigation did not proceed any further, and the new friends took the road to the Pont-au-Change. At the corner of the Place du Châtelet, the registrar of the Minister of War, following the programme he had announced, purchased some oysters, and continued his way by the Quai de Gèvres.

The dwelling of this individual was simple. The Citizen Durand inhabited three little rooms in the Place de Grève, in a house without any porter. Each tenant had a key of the door in the passage, and it was agreed that if any one had omitted to take his key, he should intimate the same by one, two, or three raps with the knocker, according to the story he inhabited, and any one who was waiting, and heard the signal, then descended and opened the door; but the Citizen Durand, having provided himself with his key, had not any occasion to knock. They ascended two flights of stairs, when the Citizen Durand drew another key from his pocket, and they both entered.

The registrar of the Palace found his friend's wife much to his taste. She was indeed a charming woman; an appearance of profound melancholy diffused over her countenance stamped it with an expression of deep interest. It has always been allowed that sadness is seductive in women, especially pretty women. It attracts all men without exception, even registrars, — for registrars are but men after all; and what man possessed with natural feeling would not wish to console a pretty woman in affliction, and, as the Citizen Dorat remarks, "Change the pale tint of the white rose to a livelier hue"?

The two registrars did ample justice to their excellent supper; it was only Madame Durand who ate nothing.

In the mean time conversation proceeded. The registrar inquired of his brother registrar — with a curiosity the more remarkable in these days, when such frightful dramas were daily enacted — concerning the customs of the Palace, the days of judgment, and the means of surveillance.

The registrar of the Palace, delighted at being listened to with so much deference, replied with the greatest complaisance, spoke of the manners of the jailers, of Fouquier

Tinville, and lastly of Citizen Sanson, the principal actor in the tragedies daily performed upon the Place de la Revolution.

Then in his turn, addressing his colleague and host, he made various inquiries concerning his vocation and ministry.

"Oh!" said Durand, "I am not so well informed as yourself, being a person of much less importance, seeing that I am rather secretary to the registrar than the incumbent of the place. I do the work of the registrar-in-chief, — an obscure employment, — laborious for me, profitable for them; but that is the way with all bureaucracies, not excepting those of the Revolution. Heaven and earth may perhaps change one day, but these things never."

"Well, I will assist you, Citizen," said the registrar of the Palace, charmed with the excellence of his host's wine, and above all with the beautiful eyes of Madame Durand.

"Thanks!" said he to whom this offer had been made, "anything to vary the habits; and locality is some distraction to a poor employee. I wish to protract my work at the Conciergerie rather than to hasten it, and therefore thought if I might every day bring Madame Durand with me to the office, who is very dull here — "

"I do not see any inconvenience in that," said the registrar of the Palace, delighted with the prospect of the charming recreation afforded him by his colleague.

"She can dictate the papers," said the Citizen Durand; "and occasionally when our work is finished, if you have not found this evening unpleasant, you can return and spend an hour or two with us."

"Yes; but not too often," replied the registrar of the Palace, foppishly; "for I declare I shall be scolded if I

return later than usual to a small house in the Rue du Petit Musc."

"Oh, we shall arrange all that splendidly; shall we not, my dear?"

Madame Durand, pale and melancholy as usual, raised her eyes toward her husband, and replied, —

"What you wish shall be done."

Eleven o'clock struck, announcing it was time to retire. The registrar of the Palace rose and took leave of his new friends, expressing the great pleasure he felt in making their acquaintance.

The Citizen Durand conducted his friend to the landing, then re-entered the apartment.

"Go, Geneviève, go to bed!" said he.

The young woman made no reply, but rose directly, took her lamp, and withdrew to the bedroom on the right. Durand, or rather Dixmer, watched her departure, remained stationary for a moment with a gloomy, thoughtful expression of countenance, and then passed into his own chamber on the opposite side.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE TWO BILLETS.

From this time the registrar of the Minister of War worked every evening indefatigably in his colleague's office, while Madame Durand dictated from the registers previously prepared, which Durand copied with avidity.

Durand strictly examined everything, while appearing to notice nothing. He had remarked that every evening, at nine o'clock, a basket of provisions, carried by either Richard or his wife, was placed at the door.

The instant the registrar said to the gendarme, "I am going, Citizen," one of the guards, either Gilbert or Duchesne, came out, took the basket, and carried it to Marie Antoinette.

During three consecutive evenings, when Durand had remained rather later at his post, the basket also was left untouched, since it was only when opening the door to say adieu to the registrar that the gendarme took in the basket containing the provisions, which a quarter of an hour afterward was returned empty to the same place by one of the two guards.

On the evening of the fourth day, it was the beginning of October, when after the ordinary sitting the registrar of the Palace had withdrawn, and Durand, or rather Dixmer, remained alone with his wife ; he laid down his pen, looked around and listened as if his very life was at stake ; he then rose hastily, and running noiselessly toward the door of the wicket, raised the cloth which cov-

ered the contents of the basket, and in the new bread destined for the prisoner inserted a small silver case.

Pale and trembling with that emotion which even men of the strongest organization feel when they have done an act of the most vital importance, the moment for which has been long planned and patiently awaited, he quickly regained his seat, and sank down overpowered, placing one hand on his forehead, the other on his heart.

Geneviève regarded him in silence; indeed, since the day her husband had taken her from Maurice, she had never spoken till he addressed her first. But this time she first broke silence.

"Is it to be this evening?" she inquired.

"No; to-morrow," replied Dixmer.

He then rose, and having again looked and listened, closed the registers, and approaching the wicket, knocked at the door.

"What now?" said Gilbert.

"Citizen," said he, "I am going."

"Well," said the gendarme, from the end of the cell, "good-night."

"Good-night, Citizen Gilbert."

Durand heard the grinding of the bolts, and knew that the gendarme was opening the door. He went out.

In the passage leading from the apartment of Father Richard to the court, he jostled against a turnkey dressed in a bear-skin bonnet, and dangling a heavy bunch of keys.

Dixmer was much alarmed. Perhaps this man, brutal as the generality of his species, was about to interrogate him, to watch him, and perhaps to recognize him. He drew his hat over his eyes, while Geneviève concealed herself, as she best could, in the folds of her cloak. But he was mistaken.

"Pardon!" said the turnkey only, although he was the man who had been nearly overthrown.

Dixmer trembled at the sound of that sweet soft voice. But the turnkey was doubtless pressed for time; he glided into the passage, opened Richard's door, and disappeared. Dixmer continued his road, leading Geneviève.

"It is strange," said he, when outside and the gate had closed behind them, and the freshening breeze had cooled his fevered brow.

"Oh, yes, 't is very strange!" murmured Geneviève.

In former times they would have communicated to each other the cause of their astonishment, but Dixmer now confined his thoughts to his own breast, and combated them as an hallucination; while Geneviève contented herself, on turning the corner of the Pont-au-Change, with casting a last look at the dark and gloomy Palace, where something like the phantom of a lost friend awoke in her memory many sweet and bitter remembrances.

They both reached La Grève without having exchanged a single word.

During this time the Gendarme Gilbert had brought in the basket of provisions intended for the queen. It contained some fruit, a cold chicken, a bottle of white wine, a carafe of water, and half a loaf.

Having first raised the napkin, and ascertained that everything was arranged as usual, he opened the screen.

"Citizeness," said he, "here is your supper."

Marie Antoinette divided the bread; but as her fingers pressed it, they came in contact with the silver. In an instant she comprehended that the bread contained something unusual.

When she looked around her the guard had already disappeared.

The queen remained for an instant motionless, calcu-

lating his retiring footsteps. When she felt certain he was seated by his comrade, and not till then, she drew the case from its place of concealment. It contained a billet, which she opened, and read as follows: —

"Madame, be ready to-morrow at the hour when you receive this billet, as to-morrow at this hour a female will be introduced into your Majesty's prison. This female will exchange dresses with you, and you will then quit the Conciergerie on the arm of one of your most devoted servants.

"Do not be alarmed at any noise that passes in the first compartment; let neither cries nor groans deter you, only attire yourself quickly in the dress and mantle of the female who comes to take your Majesty's place."

"This is devotion!" murmured the queen. "Thank God, I am not, as it is said, an object of execration to all!"

She then re-read the billet, when the second paragraph attracted her attention, — "Let neither cries nor groans deter you."

"Oh! that means they will sacrifice my two guards. Poor men, who have evinced so much kindness and pity toward me! Oh, never! — never!"

She tore off the blank portion of the letter, and having neither pen nor ink, pricked on the paper the following words, —

I neither can nor will accept the sacrifice of any one's life in exchange for my own. M. A.

She then replaced the paper in the case, which she concealed in the other half of the broken bread.

This operation was just completed when ten o'clock struck; and the queen, holding the piece of bread in her hand, sadly counted the strokes which vibrated slowly

and distantly, when she heard at one of the windows opening upon the court termed the women's court a grating sound, like that produced by a diamond dividing the glass. This noise was followed by a slight knock upon the window, which was several times repeated, with the intention of concealing the cough of a man. Then at the corner of the pane a small roll of paper appeared, which glided slowly down and fell on the inside of the wall. The queen then heard the sound of keys jingling and clashing against each other, and receding footsteps on the pavement.

She was aware that the window had been perforated at this corner, and that through this aperture the departing individual had conveyed a paper which was doubtless a billet. It was now lying on the ground. The queen fixed her eyes upon it, listening if either of her guards was approaching, but heard them conversing in a low tone as they usually did, as if by a tacit agreement not to annoy her with their voices. Then she rose softly, holding her breath, and secured the paper. Some minute and hard substance slipped from it, which, falling on the bricks, sounded like metal. It was the most exquisite file that could be imagined, — more of the jewel than the tool, — one of those steel springs, with which the most feeble and uninitiated hand could, in a quarter of an hour, divide a bar of iron. The paper said: —

"Madame, to-morrow, at half-past nine, a man will be conversing with the gendarmes who guard you, through the window of the women's court. During this time your Majesty will saw the third bar of your window, going from the left to the right. Cut slanting. A quarter of an hour will suffice for your Majesty; and then be prepared to escape through the window. This advice reaches you from one of your most devoted and faithful subjects; one who has consecrated his

life to your Majesty's service, and would be happy also to sacrifice it for you."

"Oh!" murmured the queen, "it must be a snare. But no; this writing appears familiar to me, — it is the same as at the Temple. It is — it must be that of the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge! God is perhaps willing that I should escape."

And the queen fell on her knees, and took refuge in prayer, the only balm and consolation undenied to the unfortunate prisoner.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE PREPARATIONS OF DIXMER.

The morrow, prefaced by a sleepless night, at length arrived, presenting a terrible appearance, and it might, without exaggeration, be said that the sky was the color of blood.

Indeed, each day at this epoch and in this year, however beautiful the sun, had a livid hue.

The queen slept with difficulty, and it was a sleep without repose. Hardly had she closed her eyes when she seemed to see blood, when she seemed to hear shrieks.

She had dropped asleep with the file in her hand. One part of the day was devoted by her to prayer, and the guards, seeing her often thus engaged, did not feel any alarm at what they considered an increase of religious feeling.

From time to time, however, she examined the file transmitted to her by one of her intended deliverers, and compared the fragility of the instrument with the strength of the bar.

Fortunately, these bars were only secured in the wall on one side, — that is to say, at the lower part.

The upper part was set in a crossbar ; the lower part divided, there was only to pull the bar, and it of course would yield.

But it was not the physical difficulties which worried the queen. She perfectly comprehended that the thing was possible, and it was this very possibility which caused hope, like a blood-red meteor, to dazzle her eyes.

She felt that to reach her, her friends must necessarily sacrifice her guards; and could she at any price consent to the death of the only individuals who, for a length of time, had evinced any interest in her, or pity for her?

On the other hand, beyond these bars which she had been directed to saw, over the bodies of the two men who would have to die in endeavoring to prevent her deliverers from reaching her, were life, liberty, and perhaps vengeance, — three things so sweet, especially to a woman, that she asked pardon of God for so earnestly desiring them.

She believed, moreover, that not the slightest suspicion agitated the minds of her guards; that they had not any idea of a snare (if such a thing existed) into which it was intended their prisoner should fall.

These simple men would have betrayed themselves to eyes so much exercised as those of this woman, habituated to detect evil from having so severely suffered from it.

The queen, then, entirely abandoned the idea that these double overtures were contrived as a trap; but as the fear of being betrayed into this snare disappeared, the still greater apprehension increased of bloodshed for her sake, before her very eyes.

"Strange destiny! sublime sight!" murmured she; "two conspiracies united to save a poor queen, or rather a poor female prisoner who has had no means of inducing or encouraging these conspiracies which are about to take place at the same moment! Who knows? Perhaps there may be one only. Perhaps it may be a double mine, leading to one and the same point.

"If I wished, I might then be saved.

"But a poor woman sacrificed in my stead! — two men killed before this woman could reach me! God and the future might perhaps forgive me. Impossible! impossible!"

Then passed and repassed in her mind visions of the great devotion of servants for their masters, and the ancient traditions of the right exercised by masters over the lives of their retainers, — phantasies almost effaced from the mind of expiring royalty.

"Anne of Austria would have accepted this," said she. "Anne of Austria would have set aside every consideration to the safety of the royal person.

"Anne of Austria was of the same blood, and was almost in the same situation as myself.

"What madness to have come to France to pursue Anne of Austria's principles of royalty! Was I not brought hither? Two kings said, 'It is important that two royal children who have never seen or loved each other, who perhaps never may love each other, should be married at the same altar, to die upon the same scaffold.

"And then will not my death accelerate that of my poor child, who in the eyes of my few friends is still king of France?

"And when my son, like his father, is dead, will not their shades both smile on me in pity, seeing me, in order to spare some drops of plebeian blood, stain with my own the remains of the throne of Saint Louis?"

In this ever-increasing anguish of thought, this fever of doubt whose pulsations went on in geometrical progression, and in a tempest of terror and fear, the unhappy queen continued till the arrival of night.

She had several times closely scrutinized her guards; but they had never appeared more composed.

Never had she been more forcibly struck by the invariable kindness and attention of these two uneducated men.

When the darkness of night reigned in the cell; when

the steps of the patrol, the noise of resounding arms, and the barking of dogs awoke the echoes of the gloomy vaults; when all the horrors of the prison revealed themselves, gloomy and hopeless, — Marie Antoinette, subdued by the natural weakness of a woman, rose affrighted.

"Oh, I will fly! I will fly!" said she. "Yes, yes; I will fly! When he comes, when he speaks, I will saw the bar. I will await what God and my deliverers ordain me. I owe myself to my children. They shall not murder them; or if they slay them, and I am free — oh, then, at least —"

She did not conclude; her eyes closed, and her deep emotion checked all utterance. This was a frightful vision to the unfortunate queen, enclosed with gratings and iron bars. But soon this vision disappeared, and in its stead another presented itself to her view. Gratings and bolts had vanished. She saw herself in the midst of a dark, stern, inflexible army; she orders the fire to consume, the sword to leap from the scabbard, and vengeance to be taken on a people she will no longer claim as her own.

During this time Gilbert and Duchesne were conversing tranquilly, and preparing their evening repast.

At this time, also, Dixmer and Geneviève entered the Conciergerie, and installed themselves in the office as usual. At the end of an hour the registrar of the Palace, having completed his business, according to custom took his departure, leaving them alone to themselves.

Directly the door had closed on his colleague, Dixmer rushed toward the empty basket placed at the door in exchange for that of the evening. He seized the bread, broke it, and found the case. The queen's answer was enclosed within it; he grew pale on reading it.

Geneviève observed him tear it into a thousand pieces, and throw them into the mouth of the burning stove.

"It is well," said he; "all is arranged."

Then turning toward Geneviève, —

"Come here, Madame," said he; "I must speak with you, and must speak low." Geneviève, motionless and cold as marble, gave a gesture of assent, and approached him.

"The time has arrived, Madame; listen to me!"

"Yes, sir."

"You prefer a death beneficial to your cause, — a death that will insure you the blessings of your party and pity from the whole nation, — to an ignominious and revengeful end of life, do you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"I might have killed you on the spot when I found you in the house of your lover; but a man who, like myself, consecrates his life to a holy and honorable cause, ought to be able to profit by his own private griefs by rendering them subservient to this cause. This I have done, or rather intend to do. I have, as you see, denied myself the pleasure of doing myself justice, and have also spared your lover."

Something resembling a fugitive but appalling smile flitted over the lips of Geneviève.

"But as for your lover, you who know me should be well aware that I only bide my time."

"Monsieur," said Geneviève, "I am ready. Then wherefore all this prelude?"

"You are ready?"

"Yes, I am ready. Kill me, if you choose; you have good cause to do so."

Dixmer looked at Geneviève, and started in spite of himself. She at this moment appeared sublimely beau-

tiful; a glory the most brilliant of all shone around her, — the glory that emanates from love.

"To continue," said Dixmer. "I have informed the queen; she expects you, notwithstanding she will in all probability raise numerous objections. You must overrule them all."

"Give me your orders, sir, and I will execute them."

"Immediately," continued Dixmer. "I shall knock at the door; Gilbert will open it, and with this poniard —" here Dixmer threw open his coat, and half drawing from its scabbard a double-edged poniard — "with this I shall kill him."

Geneviève shuddered.

Dixmer made a motion with his hand to command her attention.

"The instant I strike him, dart into the second chamber, that of the queen. There is, as you are aware, no door, only a screen. You will exchange clothes with her while I despatch the other soldier. Then I shall take the queen's arm, and pass through the wicket with her."

"Very well," said Geneviève, coldly.

"You understand me!" said Dixmer. "You have been seen each evening in your black taffeta mantle which conceals your face. Place your mantle upon her Majesty, and arrange it on her precisely as you have been accustomed to arrange it on yourself."

"All shall be done as you desire, sir."

"It remains now for me to pardon and to thank you, Madame."

Geneviève shook her head with a scornful smile.

"I neither want your pardon nor your thanks, sir," said she, extending her hand. "What I have done, or rather am about to do, would efface a crime. I have

only been guilty of a weakness; and again, this weakness — recall your own conduct, sir — you all but forced me to commit. I withdrew myself from him; you drove me back into his arms; so you are at the same time instigator, judge, and avénger. It remains for me to pardon you my death; and I do pardon you. It is I who should thank you for death, since life has become insupportable to me, separated from the only man I love; since that hour especially when you severed by your savage vengeance every tie that bound me to him."

Dixmer drove his nails into his flesh. He strove to reply, but his voice failed him.

He moved toward the wicket.

"Time passes," said he, at last. "Madame, every moment is of consequence. Are you ready?"

"I have told you, sir," replied Geneviève, with the calmness and courage of a martyr, "I await you."

Dixmer collected his papers, saw that the gates were fast closed, so that no one could enter the wicket, and then wished to reiterate his instructions.

"It is unnecessary, sir," said Geneviève. "I know perfectly all I have to do."

"Then, adieu!" and Dixmer extended his hand, as if at this supreme moment all recrimination was effaced before the grandeur of the situation and the sublimity of the sacrifice.

Geneviève, shuddering, touched with the tips of her fingers the proffered hand of her husband.

"Place yourself near me, Madame, and the moment I have struck Gilbert, pass on."

"I am ready."

Then Dixmer grasped in his right hand his poinard; with his left he knocked at the gate.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE PREPARATIONS OF THE CHEVALIER.

During the scene described in the preceding chapter as passing at the door of the register-office leading into the prison of the queen, or rather into the first compartment occupied by the two gendarmes, other preparations were taking place on the opposite side, — that is to say, in the women's court.

Suddenly a man appeared, like a statue of stone which had detached itself from the wall. He was followed by two dogs, and was humming the "Ça ira," a song much in vogue at this period. He held in his hand a large bunch of keys, which, in passing, he had rattled against the bars which barricaded the window of the queen.

The royal prisoner at first started, but recognizing the signal, immediately opened her window softly to commence her work, with a hand more experienced than would have been believed; for more than once in the blacksmith's shop where her royal husband amused himself by passing part of the day, she had with her delicate fingers handled instruments similar to that upon which at this moment depended her every chance of safety and deliverance.

Directly the man with the keys heard the queen's window open, he knocked at that of the gendarmes.

"Ah! ah!" said Gilbert, looking through the window, "here is the Citizen Mardoche."

"Himself," said the turnkey. "Well, but it appears you keep strict watch?"

"Much as usual, Citizen Key-bearer. It seems to me you do not often find us at fault?"

"Ah!" said Mardoche; "and vigilance is more than ever necessary to-night."

"Bah!" said Duchesne, who had now approached.

"Truly."

"Why, then?"

"Open the window, and I will tell you all about it."

Gilbert opened it, and shook hands with Mardoche, who had already made friends with the two gendarmes.

"What is it, Citizen Mardoche?" repeated Gilbert.

"The sitting of the Convention has been rather hot to-day. Have you read about it?"

"No. What passed then?"

"It was first stated that the Citizen Hébert had made a discovery."

"What?"

"It is, that the conspirators believed to be dead are found to be alive, and very much alive indeed."

"Oh! yes," said Gilbert; "Delessart and Thierry; I have heard speak of that. They are in England, the scoundrels!"

"And the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?" asked the key-bearer, raising his voice so that the queen might hear.

"What, is he in England also?"

"Not at all," said Mardoche; "he is in France," still speaking in the same loud key.

"He has returned, then?"

"He has never quitted it."

"Well, he, for one, has good courage," said Duchesne.

"Indeed, he has."

"Well, are they going to arrest him?"

"Certainly; but that is much easier said than done."

At this moment the queen's file grated so forcibly

upon the iron bars that the turnkey feared it might be heard, notwithstanding all his efforts to drown the sound. He hastily trod upon the paw of the nearest of his dogs, which uttered a prolonged howl of pain.

"Oh, poor beast!" said Gilbert.

"Bah!" said the turnkey, "he had not put on his clogs. Be quiet, Girondin; will you be quiet?"

"Is your dog named Girondin, Citizen Mardoche?"

"Yes; that is the name I have given him."

"But pray go on with what you were telling us," said Duchesne, who, imprisoned himself, took that lively interest in news that all prisoners feel.

"I was telling you that in the Citizen Hébert you see a good patriot; and Hébert has made a motion to return the Austrian to the Temple."

"And why so?"

"Faith! because he pretends that she was only withdrawn from the Temple to remove her from the immediate inspection of the Commune of Paris."

"Yes; and from the attempts of that cursed Maison-Rouge," said Gilbert; "it seems too that the subterranean passage still exists."

"That was the reply the Citizen Sauterre made; but Hébert said, the instant that was defeated there was no more danger; that at the Temple, fewer precautions were requisite for the security of Marie Antoinette than here; and finally, that the Temple was a much more secure place than the Conciergerie."

"Faith!" said Gilbert, "for my part, I wish they would remove her again to the Temple."

"I understand; you are tired of the confinement?"

"No; but it makes me melancholy."

Maison-Rouge coughed loudly, as the noise of the file biting through the iron bar was distinctly heard.

"Well, what have they decided on?" said Duchesne, when the turnkey's cough had subsided.

"It is settled that she shall remain here, but that her trial shall take place immediately."

"Poor woman!" said Gilbert.

Duchesne, whose sense of hearing was no doubt more acute than that of his colleague, or his attention less engrossed by the recital of Mardoche, stooped down to listen on the left side of the compartment.

The turnkey saw the movement.

"So you see, Citizen Duchesne," said he, in an animated tone, "the attempts of the conspirators will become the more desperate from the fact of their having less time before them for their execution. They are going to double the guards of the prisons; so look out, Citizen Gendarme, since the matter in question is nothing less than the irruption of an armed force into the Conciergerie. They will murder all, sacrifice every impediment, till they effect an entrance to the queen, — to the widow of Capet, I mean to say."

"Ah! bah! How can these conspirators of yours get in?"

"Disguised as patriots, they will pretend to recommence the 2d of September, the rascals! and when once the gates are open, good-night!"

There was an instant's silence, produced by the astonishment of the guards.

The turnkey heard with emotions of joy and terror the continued grating of the file. Nine o'clock struck.

At the same moment there was a knock at the wicket, but the gendarmes, preoccupied, did not reply.

"Well, we shall watch, we shall watch!" said Gilbert.

"And if necessary, will die at our post like stanch Republicans," added Duchesne.

"She must soon be done," said the turnkey to himself, wiping the drops of perspiration from his face.

"And you on your side," said Gilbert, "keep on the lookout, I presume? They would spare you no more than us, were such an event as you have been talking of to take place."

"I should think so," said the turnkey. "I pass the night in going the round; thus I am always on the alert. The rest of you at least relieve each other, and can sleep every other night."

At this moment a second summons at the wicket was heard. Mardoche started; any event, however trifling, might mar the execution of his project.

"What is it, then?" demanded he, in spite of himself.

"Nothing, nothing!" said Gilbert; "it is only the registrar of the Minister of War. He is going now, and comes to inform me of it."

"Oh, very well!" said Mardoche.

The registrar still continued to knock.

"All right!" cried Gilbert, without leaving the window. "Good-night! Adieu!"

"I think he is speaking to you," said Duchesne, turning toward the door. The voice of the registrar was then heard.

"Come here, Citizen Gendarme," said he; "I wish to speak to you."

This voice, which appeared affected by some strong emotion which deprived it of its natural accent, startled the turnkey, who fancied he recognized it.

"What do you want, Citizen Durand?" asked Gilbert.

"I wish to speak a word with you."

"Well, you can tell me to-morrow."

"No, this evening; it must be this evening," replied the same voice.

"Hah!" murmured the turnkey, "what is about to happen now? It is Dixmer's voice."

Sinister and vibrating, this voice seemed to borrow something funereal from the far-off echoes of the gloomy corridor.

Duchesne turned round.

"Well," said Gilbert, "if he wishes it I must go," and he directed his steps toward the door.

The turnkey availed himself of this moment when the attention of the two gendarmes was thus occupied by this unforeseen circumstance. He ran toward the window of the queen.

"Is it done?" said he.

"I have more than half finished," said the queen.

"Oh, for the love of God!" murmured he; "make haste! make haste!"

"Hallo! Citizen Mardoche," said Duchesne, "what has become of you?"

"Here I am," said the turnkey, returning quickly to the window of the first compartment.

At that very moment, and as he turned to resume his former station, a frightful cry resounded through the prison, then an oath, and the ring of a sword snatched from its scabbard.

"Villain! brigand!" cried Gilbert, and the sound of a struggle was heard in the corridor.

At the same moment the door opened, displaying to the eyes of the turnkey two shadows struggling in the wicket, and thus affording free passage to a female, who, pushing aside Duchesne, rushed into the queen's chamber.

Duchesne, without noticing the woman, ran to his comrade's assistance.

The turnkey sprang toward the other window, and beheld the female on her knees before the queen, praying

and supplicating her Majesty to exchange clothes with her.

He lowered his burning eyes, endeavoring to gain a clearer view of this woman whom he feared he had already recognized too well. All at once he uttered a dreadful cry.

"Geneviève! Geneviève!" murmured he.

The queen had dropped the file from her hand, and seemed transfixed with despair. Here, alas! was another abortive attempt.

The turnkey seized the bar with both hands, shook it with all his strength; but the file had not accomplished its work, the bar of iron would not yield to his efforts.

Meanwhile Dixmer had hurled Gilbert back into the prison, and would have entered with him, but Duchesne, leaning against the door, prevented him. But he was unable to close it, for Dixmer, in despair, had placed his arm between the gate and the wall.

In his hand he still retained the poniard, which in the contest, checked by the buckle of the belt, had glided over the gendarme's breast, tearing open his coat and lacerating his flesh.

The two gendarmes encouraged each other to reunite their efforts, at the same time calling loudly for assistance.

Dixmer felt his arm must break; he placed his shoulder against the door, shook it violently, and succeeded in withdrawing his bruised arm.

The door closed with a great noise; Duchesne pushed the bolts, while Gilbert turned the key.

A rapid step was heard in the corridor, then all was over. The two gendarmes looked at each other, and searched everywhere around them.

They detected the sound of the assumed turnkey wrenching the bar.

Gilbert rushed into the queen's chamber, where he found Geneviève entreating her Majesty on her knees to exchange clothes with her.

Duchesne seized his gun and ran to the window; he discovered a man hanging to the bar, which he shook with rage, and tried in vain to scale.

He pointed his gun.

The young man saw it levelled at him.

"Oh, yes! yes!" cried he, "kill me! kill me!" and sublime in his despair, he bared his breast to the bullet.

"Chevalier," said the queen, — "Chevalier, I entreat you to live."

At the sound of the queen's voice the Chevalier sank upon his knees. The gun was discharged, but this movement saved him; the ball passed over his head. Geneviève, imagining her friend was dead, fell upon the ground without sense or motion. When the smoke disappeared, no one was seen in the women's court.

Ten minutes afterward, thirty soldiers, led by two commissioners, searched the Conciergerie even to its most inaccessible retreats.

They discovered no one; the registrar had passed, calm and smiling, before Father Richard's arm-chair.

As to the turnkey, he had gone out crying, "Alarm! alarm!"

The sentinel opposed his egress with his bayonet, but his two dogs seized the soldier by the throat.

Geneviève alone was arrested, interrogated, and imprisoned.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE INQUIRY.

We can no longer leave in forgetfulness one of the principal personages of this history, he who, during the accomplishment of the various incidents of the preceding chapter had suffered most of all, and whose anxieties merit the liveliest sympathy on the part of our readers.

The sun shone gloriously in the Rue de la Monnaie, and the gossips were discoursing merrily at their doors, as if for the last ten months a mist of blood had not hung over the city, when Maurice returned home, bringing, as he had promised, the cabriolet with him. He gave the bridle of the horse to a shoeblack, on the pavement of Saint Eustache, and hastily ran upstairs, his heart filled with joy.

Love is a vivifying sentiment. It animates hearts long deadened to every other sensation; it peoples the desert; it resuscitates before the eyes the shade of the beloved one; it causes the voice which sings in the soul of the lover to display before him the entire creation illumined by the brilliant rays of hope and happiness, — at the same time it is egotistical, blinding him who loves to all but the existence of the beloved object.

Maurice neither saw these women nor listened to their commentaries; he saw only Geneviève preparing for a departure which was at last to bring them durable happiness; he heard only Geneviève singing carelessly her customary song, and this little song trilled so sweetly in

his ear that he might have sworn he was listening to the varied modulations of her voice, mingled with the less harmonious sound of closing locks.

Upon the landing Maurice stopped; the door was half open; it was generally kept closed, and this circumstance surprised Maurice. He looked all around, thinking Geneviève was in the corridor. She was not there. He entered, looked in the antechamber, the dining-room, the parlor, the bed-chamber; but anteroom, parlor, and bed-chamber were all empty. He loudly called. No one replied.

The official, as he knew, had gone out. Maurice imagined that during his absence Geneviève had perhaps required some cord to fasten her trunk, or some refreshments to store in the carriage, and had gone out to purchase them. He thought it imprudent; but although every moment his anxiety increased, he as yet feared nothing serious.

Maurice waited for some time, walking up and down the room with long impatient strides, and occasionally leaning out of the window, which, half opened, admitted puffs of air charged heavily with rain.

But soon he believed that he heard a step upon the staircase; he listened, it was not that of Geneviève; he ran to the landing, looked over the palisade, and recognized the official, who leisurely mounted the stairs after the manner of domestics.

"Scævola!" cried he.

The official raised his head.

"Ah! is it you, Citizen?"

"Yes. Where is the lady?"

"The lady?" demanded Scævola, with much surprise, as he continued mounting the stairs.

"Certainly! Have you seen her below?"

"No."

"Go down, then, and ask the porter, and inquire of all the neighbors!"

Scævola descended.

"Quicker! quicker!" said his master; "do you not see I am burning with impatience?"

After waiting five or six minutes, and Scævola not having made his appearance, Maurice re-entered the apartment and again leaned out of the window. He saw Scævola enter several shops and leave them without having gained any fresh intelligence. He called him. The official raised his head, and saw his master impatiently looking from the window. Maurice signed to him to come up.

"It is impossible that she has gone out," said Maurice to himself, and again he called, "Geneviève! Geneviève!"

All was silent as death; even the solitary chamber appeared no longer to have an echo. Scævola reappeared.

"Well?" demanded Maurice.

"The porter is the only person who has seen her."

"The porter has seen her; how was that?"

"He saw her go out."

"She has gone out, then?"

"It seems so."

"Alone! It is impossible Geneviève would go out alone."

"She was not alone, Citizen; she had a man with her."

"How! a man with her?"

"That is what the porter says, at least."

"Go and seek him. I must find out who this man was."

Scævola made a step toward the door, then, turning, "Wait," said he, appearing to reflect.

"What is it?" said Maurice. "Speak, or you will be the death of me!"

"Perhaps it was the man who ran after me."

"What for?"

"To tell me that you wished the key."

"What key, stupid! will you not tell me?"

"The key of your apartment."

"You gave the key of the apartment to a stranger?" cried Maurice, seizing the official by the collar with both hands.

"It was not to a stranger, sir; it was to one of your friends."

"Ah, yes! to one of my friends. It is Lorin, no doubt. She has gone out with Lorin," and smiling a ghastly smile Maurice wiped away the drops of agony which had gathered on his brow.

"No, sir; no, it was not he. Zounds! I think I should know Monsieur Lorin."

"Who was it, then?"

"You know the man who came here one day?"

"What day?"

"The day when you were so sad; and he took you away with him, and you returned so happy."

Scævola had remarked all these things.

Maurice regarded him with a bewildered air; a cold shudder ran through his body. Then after a long silence:

"Dixmer!" cried he.

"By my faith! yes. I think it was he, Citizen."

Maurice tottered, and fell back upon a chair.

"Oh, my God!" murmured he.

When he re-opened his eyes they encountered the violets, forgotten, or rather left there by Geneviève.

He rushed toward them, seized and kissed them; then, remarking where she had placed them, —

"There is no longer any doubt," said he, "these violets — It is her last adieu."

When Maurice turned round he perceived for the first time that the trunk was half full, the rest of the linen was on the floor, or in the half-opened wardrobe.

The linen which lay upon the floor had no doubt fallen from Geneviève's hand at the appearance of Dixmer.

It was all explained now. The scene rose vivid and terrible before his eyes, between these four walls that had lately witnessed so much happiness.

Till now Maurice had remained crushed and heart-broken. Now the reaction was fearful. His rage bordered on frenzy.

He rose, closed the window, took from the top of his desk a pair of pistols, ready loaded for their intended journey, looked to the priming, and finding all right placed them in his pocket.

He also furnished himself with two rolls of louis, which notwithstanding his patriotism he had thought it prudent to conceal at the bottom of a drawer, and taking his sabre in his hand, —

"Scævola," said he, "you are attached to me, I think; you have served my father and myself for fifteen years."

"Yes, Citizen," replied the official, terrified at the pallor and nervous trembling he had never before remarked in his master, who had always been justly considered one of the most courageous and vigorous of men, — "yes; what are your orders for me?"

"Listen! if this lady who lived here — " He stopped; his voice trembled so much in pronouncing these words that he was unable to proceed. "If she should return," continued he, after a moment's pause, "receive her, close the door after her, take this gun, and station yourself upon

the staircase; and for your head, for your life, for your soul, do not permit a single person to enter here! If any one should try to break through the door, defend it! Strike! kill! kill! and fear nothing, Scævola, for I will answer for all."

The young man's impetuous harangue, his vehement confidence, electrified Scævola.

"I will not only kill, but will even suffer death for the Citizeness Geneviève," said he.

"Thanks. Now attend! This apartment is odious to me, and I shall not enter it again until I find her; if she has been able to effect her escape, if she return, place before the window the Japan vase with the china-asters, which she loved so much. That is, during the day. At night, put a lantern. Every time I pass the end of the street I shall know, and if I see neither vase nor lantern I shall still continue my researches."

"Be prudent, sir! Oh, pray be prudent!" continued Scævola.

His master made no reply, but rushing from the chamber flew down the staircase as if possessed of wings, and ran toward Lorin's house.

It would be difficult to paint the astonishment and rage of our worthy poet when he heard the news; we might as well attempt to indite the touching elegies with which Orestes inspired Pylades.

"And you do not know where she is?" he repeated, incessantly.

"Lost! disappeared!" shrieked Maurice, in accents of despair, "he has killed her, Lorin! he has killed her!"

"No, my dear friend; no, Maurice; he has not killed her; it is not after so many days of reflection that he would be likely to kill a woman like Geneviève. If he had thought of doing so, he would have done it on the

spot, and have left her corpse there in token of his just vengeance. No, no; he has taken her away, only too happy at having regained his lost treasure."

"You do not know him, Lorin; you do not know him! This man had something fatal in his look."

"You are mistaken," said Lorin; "he always struck me as a brave man. He has taken her as a sacrifice. He will get himself arrested with her; and they will die together. Ah, there is the danger!"

These words redoubled Maurice's fury.

"I will find her! I will find her, or perish in the attempt!" cried he.

"Oh, as to that, we are certain to find her," said Lorin; "only calm yourself. They fail in success who do not reflect; and when agitated as you are, we reflect badly and unwisely."

"Adieu, Lorin, adieu!"

"Where are you going, then?"

"I am going."

"You will leave me, then? Why is that?"

"Because this concerns me only. I alone should risk my life to save Geneviève's."

"Do you wish to die?"

"I will face all. I will find out the president of the Committee of Surveillance. I will speak to Hébert, to Danton, to Robespierre. I will avow all; but she must be restored to me."

"Very well," said Lorin; and without adding another word he rose, adjusted his belt, put on his military cap, and as Maurice had done, provided himself with a pair of pistols, ready loaded, which he put in his pocket.

"Let us go," said he, simply.

"But you will compromise yourself," said Maurice.

"Well! what of that?"

"Where shall we seek her first?" asked Maurice.

"We will first search in the old quarter, you know,—the old Rue Saint Jacques; then we will watch for Maison-Rouge, as where he is, doubtless Dixmer will be also; then we will draw near the houses in the Vieille Corderie. You know they talk of transferring Marie Antoinette to the Temple; believe me, men like them will not, till the last moment, abandon the hope of saving her."

"Yes," repeated Maurice; "you are right— Maison-Rouge, do you think he is in Paris?"

"Dixmer is certainly."

"It is true, it is true; of course they will be together!" said Maurice, to whom these vague ideas seemed partially to restore reason.

The two friends commenced their search immediately, but all in vain. Paris is large and well adapted for concealment. Never was a pit known to conceal more obscurely the secret confided to its keeping by crime or misery.

A hundred times Maurice and Lorin passed over the Place de Grève, a hundred times passed the house that contained Geneviève, watched incessantly by Dixmer, as the priests watch the victim destined for sacrifice.

Geneviève on her side, seeing herself destined to perish, like all generous souls accepted the sacrifice, and only wished to die quietly and unnoticed; besides, she dreaded less for Dixmer than for the cause of the queen the publicity that Maurice would not fail to give to his vengeance.

She kept, then, a silence as profound as if death had already sealed her lips.

In the mean time, without saying anything to Lorin, Maurice had applied to the members of the terrible Com-

mittee of Public Safety; and Lorin, without speaking to Maurice, had, on his part, determined to adopt similar proceedings.

Thus on the same day a red cross was affixed by Fouquier Tinville to both their names, and the word "Suspects" united them in a sanguinary embrace.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE SENTENCE.

On the twenty-third day of the month of the second year of the French Republic, one and indivisible, corresponding to the 14th of October, 1793, old style, as it was then called, a curious crowd had since the morning invaded the galleries of the hall where the revolutionary sittings were held.

The passages of the Palace, the avenues of the Conciergerie, were lined with greedy and impatient spectators, who made over one to another their reports and passions, as the waves transmit their froth and foam.

Notwithstanding the curiosity with which each spectator was agitated, and perhaps even on account of this curiosity, each wave of this sea, swaying, pressed between two barriers, — the outer barrier which urged it forward, the inner barrier which urged it backward, — each wave kept, in this flux and reflux, almost the same position which it had at first taken. Thus those more conveniently situated, comprehending it was necessary they should obtain forgiveness for their good fortune, kept this object in view by transmitting to their neighbors less comfortably and commodiously placed than themselves, and who in their turn recounted to others, the first words they heard, and all they saw.

Near the door of the Tribunal a group of men was collected, rudely disputing for ten lines of space in width and height, — for ten lines in breadth sufficed to see be-

tween two shoulders the corner of the hall and the form of the judges; for ten lines in height was sufficient to overlook the entire hall and see the face of the accused.

Unfortunately, this entrance to the passage of the hall, this narrow defile, was almost entirely filled by a man with broad shoulders, and his arms akimbo, who most effectually excluded the wavering crowd ready to drop into the hall if this rampart of flesh were to give way.

This immovable man was young and handsome; and at every push bestowed on him by the crowd, he shook his head of hair, thick as a lion's mane, under which gleamed a dark and resolute expression; then, when either by a look or a movement he had repelled the crowd and resisted their violent attacks, he fell back into his attentive immobility.

A hundred times this compact mass had, notwithstanding, striven hard to overthrow him, — as, from his great height, to see anything behind him was utterly impossible, — but, as we have said, firm as a rock, he stood his ground.

In the mean time, at the other extremity of this human sea, in the midst of the crushing crowd, another man was forcing a passage, with a perseverance almost amounting to ferocity. Nothing impeded his indefatigable exertions, — neither the blows of those he left behind, the fearful imprecations of those he almost stifled in passing, nor the wails of the women, for there were many females in this crowd.

To blows he responded with blows; to imprecations, by a look before which the most courageous quailed; to complaints, by a carelessness bordering on disdain.

At last he arrived behind the powerful young man who, so to speak, closed the entrance to the hall. In the midst of the general expectation — for all were anxious

to see how the contest between two such rude antagonists would terminate — he essayed his peculiar method, which consisted in planting like wedges his elbows between two spectators, and thus breaking through the thickest of the crowd.

He was, notwithstanding, a short young man, whose wan face and emaciated appearance betokened latent illness.

His elbows had scarcely touched the young man before him, when he, indignant at the aggression, turned sharply round, at the same moment raising his clinched fist, which threatened, in falling, to crush the slender form of the intruder.

The two antagonists now found themselves face to face, when a cry of recognition escaped from each.

"Ah, Citizen Maurice," said the delicate young man, with an accent of inexpressible anguish, "permit me to pass; only let me see her, I entreat you; you may kill me afterward."

Maurice — for it was indeed he — felt himself affected by admiration and compassion for this ceaseless devotion, this adventurous daring.

"You here!" murmured he. "How imprudent!"

"Yes; but I am exhausted — O God! she speaks. Let me see her; let me hear her!"

Maurice drew aside, and the young man passed before him, and being at the head of the crowd there was nothing now to intercept the view of him who had undergone so many blows, so much buffeting, to attain his end.

All this scene, and the murmurs it occasioned, aroused the curiosity of the judges.

The accused also turned round, and immediately perceived and recognized the Chevalier.

A shudder ran through the queen's frame, seated in the iron arm-chair. The examination, conducted by the President Harmand, interpreted by Fouquier Tinville, discussed by Chauveau Lagarde, the counsel for the queen, lasted as long as the strength of the judges and the accused permitted.

During all this time Maurice remained motionless in his place, while several times already the concourse was renewed both in the hall and the corridors.

The Chevalier leaned against a pillar. He was no less pale than the marble that supported him.

The day was succeeded by a dark night; some lighted candles on the tables of the jurors, and some smoky lamps on the walls of the hall threw a red and sinister expression on the noble face of that woman who had been the cynosure of all eyes at the splendid fêtes at Versailles.

She was alone there, replying in brief and dignified language to the questions of the president, and occasionally addressing some words to her counsel in a low voice.

Her white and polished forehead retained all its wonted haughtiness. She was attired in a black dress, which she had worn ever since her husband's death.

The judges retired from the hall. The sitting had terminated.

"Have I evinced too much contempt for them, sir?" said she, addressing herself to Chauveau Lagarde.

"Ah, Madame," replied he, "you are always right when you act like yourself."

"How proud she is!" cried a woman among the audience, as if a voice from the people had replied to the question of the unfortunate queen to her advocate.

The queen turned and looked at her.

"Yes," repeated the woman, "you are proud, Antoinette; and I tell you, pride has been the ruin of you."

The queen blushed. The Chevalier turned toward the female who had uttered these words, and replied softly, "She was queen."

Maurice seized him by the wrist, saying, in a low tone, "Take care; do not forget yourself!"

"Oh, Monsieur Maurice!" replied the Chevalier, "you are a man yourself, and you know you are speaking to a man. Tell me, oh, tell me! do you think they will condemn her?"

"I do not think it," said Maurice; "I am sure of it."

"What! a woman!" said the Chevalier, with a deep groan.

"No, a queen," said Maurice; "you have yourself said so."

The Chevalier in his turn seized Maurice by the wrist, and with a force of which he appeared incapable compelled him to bend his ear. It was half-past three in the morning. Many vacuums were visible among the spectators; and a few lights burning here and there served only to render darkness visible. In one of the most obscure parts of the hall were the Chevalier and Maurice, the latter listening to what the former was telling him.

"Why are you here? What brings you here?" demanded the Chevalier; "you, sir, who have not a tiger's heart?"

"Alas!" said Maurice, "to discover what has become of an unfortunate woman."

"Yes, yes," said Maison-Rouge; "she whom her husband forced into the queen's cell? The female who was arrested before my eyes?"

"Geneviève?"

"Yes, Geneviève."

"Then Geneviève is a prisoner, sacrificed by her husband, killed by Dixmer! Oh, I comprehend all; I understand all now! Chevalier, tell me all that has occurred; tell me where she is; tell me where I can find her! Chevalier, this woman constitutes my life; do you hear me!"

"I witnessed all. I was there when she was arrested. I was there also to effect the escape of the queen; but our different projects not having been communicated to each other, injured instead of assisting our mutual cause."

"Why did you not save her, at least, — your sister, Geneviève!"

"How could I when an iron bar divided us! Oh, if you had only been there, if you had united your efforts with mine, the bar must have yielded, and both might have been saved!"

"Geneviève! Geneviève!" murmured Maurice. Then regarding Maison-Rouge with an indefinable expression of hatred and rage, —

"And Dixmer, where is he!" demanded he.

"I know not; he saved himself, as I did also."

"Oh!" said Maurice, grinding his teeth, "if ever I meet him —"

"Yes; I understand. But there is nothing yet to despair about concerning Geneviève," said Maison-Rouge; "her case is not yet desperate; but the queen — Oh! stop, Maurice, you are a man of feeling, an influential man; you have friends — Oh! I pray to you as I would pray to my God — Maurice, help me to save the queen! Maurice, Geneviève supplicates you through me!"

"Pronounce not that name, sir! Who knows but that, like Dixmer, you may have sacrificed this unhappy woman!"

"Sir," replied the Chevalier, haughtily, "when I at-

tach myself to a cause, I know better than to sacrifice any one but myself."

Maurice was about to reply, when the door of the chamber of debate opened.

"Silence, sir! silence!" said the Chevalier, "the judges are returning," and Maurice felt the hand tremble which Maison-Rouge had placed upon his arm. "Ah!" murmured the Chevalier, "my heart fails me now!"

"Have courage and constrain yourself, or you are lost!" said Maurice.

The Tribunal re-entered; and the news of its return spread rapidly through the corridors and galleries. The crowd again congregated in the hall, and even the dim lights appeared to burn brighter at this solemn and decisive moment. The queen rose and stood erect, haughty and immovable, her eyes fixed, her lips closed. The decree was then read which doomed the queen to death. She heard her sentence without even turning pale or uttering a sigh; her countenance evinced not the slightest emotion. Then turning toward the Chevalier, she regarded him with a long and eloquent look, as if to indicate her gratitude to this man whom she had ever seen a living statue of devotion, and supported on the arm of the officer of the gendarmes who commanded the forces, with a calm and dignified demeanor she quitted the court.

Maurice drew a deep sigh. "Thank God!" said he, "nothing in this declaration can compromise Geneviève; there is yet hope."

"Thank God!" murmured the Chevalier on his side, "it is all finished, and the struggle at length terminated. I have not strength to go further."

"Courage, sir!" said Maurice, in a low voice.

"I will take courage, sir," replied the Chevalier; and

having shaken hands, they disappeared by different outlets. The queen was reconducted to the Conciergerie; the large clock struck four as she entered. At the end of Pont Neuf, Maurice was stopped by Lorin.

"Halt!" said he; "you do not pass here!"

"Why?"

"First, where are you going?"

"I am going home. I can return there now, since I know what has become of her."

"So much the better; but you must not enter there."

"For what reason?"

"The reason is, that two hours ago the gendarmes went there to arrest you."

"Ah!" cried Maurice. "Well, that is the greater reason why I should go!"

"Are you mad? And Geneviève?"

"You are right. But where are we to go?"

"Zounds! To my house."

"But I shall ruin you!"

"The more reason, then, that you should come," said Lorin, dragging Maurice away with him.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE PRIEST AND THE EXECUTIONER.

On leaving the court, the queen had been conducted back to the Conciergerie. On reaching her chamber she had taken a pair of scissors, and cut off her long and beautiful ringlets, rendered still more so from the absence of powder, which she had not used for a year; she enclosed them in a packet, on which was inscribed, "For my son and daughter." She then seated herself, or rather sank into a chair, and worn out with fatigue, the trial having lasted eighteen hours, she fell asleep. At seven o'clock the noise of the opening screen roused her suddenly, and turning round, she beheld a man perfectly unknown to her.

"What do you want?" demanded she.

He approached and saluted her as respectfully as if she had not been the queen.

"I am called Sanson," said he.

The name was sufficient. The queen slightly shuddered and rose up.

"You are here early, sir; could you not have made it rather later?"

"No, Madame," replied Sanson; "I received orders to come."

As he uttered these words, he advanced still nearer to the queen. At this moment everything about this man was expressive and terrible.

"I understand," said the prisoner; "you wish to cut off my hair?"

"It is necessary, Madame," replied the executioner.

"I knew it, sir; and I wished to spare you the trouble. My hair is on the table."

Sanson followed the direction of the queen's hand.

"Only," said she, "I should like my hair sent to my children to-night."

"Madame," said Sanson, "this does not concern me."

"However, I thought — notwithstanding — "

"Oh, I get nothing, replied the executioner; "the clothes, the jewels — unless formally made over to me — all go to La Salpêtrière, and are allotted to the poor of the hospital. The Committee of Public Safety has so arranged these things."

"But, sir," persisted Marie Antoinette, "may I at least depend upon this packet being forwarded to my children?"

Sanson remained silent.

"I will endeavor to send it," said Gilbert.

The prisoner cast upon him a look of deep gratitude.

"I came," said Sanson, "to cut off your hair; but since you have done so, I can, if you wish it, leave you for a moment alone."

"I entreat you to do so, sir. I wish to collect my scattered thoughts, and offer up a prayer."

Sanson bowed and retired, when the queen once more found herself in solitude. While the condemned knelt on a low chair which served her as a *prie-dieu*, a scene no less terrible was passing in the parsonage of the small church of Saint Landry, in the city. The curé had just got up; the old housekeeper had prepared the humble morning meal, when a loud summons at the gate was heard. Even in our day, an unexpected visit to a clergyman is in general the precursor of some serious event, —

either a baptism, a marriage "in extremis," or a last confession; but at this epoch the visit of a stranger announced some matter of far graver import. Indeed, at this period the priest was no longer the mandatary of God, but rendered his account to man.

However, the Abbé Girard was of the number of those who had least cause for fear, as he had sworn to abide by the Constitution, — in him conscience and probity had spoken louder than either self-love or religious spirit. No doubt the Abbé Girard admitted the possibility of improvement in the government, and much regretted the abuses committed under the name of the Divine will, and had, while retaining his God, accepted the fraternity of the Republican régime.

"Go and see, Dame Jacinthe," said he, "who disturbs us at this early hour; and if the business is of no very pressing nature, say that this morning I have been sent for to the Conciergerie, and must go there directly."

Dame Jacinthe, formerly called Madeleine, had accepted this flowery appellation in lieu of her own, as the Abbé Girard had taken the title of citizen instead of that of curé. At the suggestion of her master, Jacinthe hastened down the steps of the little garden leading to the entrance gate. She drew back the bolts, when a thin, pale young man, much agitated, but with a frank and amiable expression, presented himself before her.

"Monsieur l'Abbé Girard?" said he.

Jacinthe, not slow to remark the disordered dress, the neglected beard, and the nervous tremor of the newcomer, augured unfavorably of him.

"Citizen," said she; "there is here neither 'Monsieur' nor 'abbé.'"

"Pardon me, Madame," replied the young man; "I meant to say the Curé of Saint Landry."

Jacinthe, notwithstanding her patriotism, was struck by the title "Madame," with which the Republicans would not have honored an empress. She, however, replied, —

"You cannot see him now; he is repeating his breviary."

"In that case I will wait," replied the young man.

"But," said Jacinthe, in whom this obstinate persistence revived her first unfavorable impression, "you will wait in vain; for he has been summoned to the Conciergerie, and must go there immediately."

The young man turned frightfully pale, or rather from pale to livid.

"It is then true!" murmured he; then raising his voice, "This, Madame, is the business which brings me to the Citizen Girard."

And in spite of the old woman he had, while speaking, effected an entrance; then coolly but firmly closing the bolts, and notwithstanding the expostulations and even menaces of Dame Jacinthe, he not only entered the house, but also the chamber of the curé, who on perceiving him uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Forgive me, Monsieur le Curé," immediately said the young man; "I wish to speak to you on a very serious subject; permit us to be alone."

The aged priest had experienced deep sorrow, and knew what it was to endure. He discerned deep and devouring passion in the confusion of the young man, and intense emotion in his fevered tones.

"Leave us, Dame Jacinthe!" said he.

The visitor impatiently followed with his eyes the receding steps of the housekeeper, who, from being accustomed to the confidence of her master, hesitated to ly; then when at length the door was closed,

"Monsieur le Curé," said the unknown, "you will first wish to know who I am. I will tell you. I am a proscribed man, doomed to death, who only at this moment lives from the power of audacity; I am the Chevalier de Maison-Rouge."

The abbé started in horror from his arm-chair.

"Fear nothing!" said the Chevalier, "no one has seen me enter here; and even those who might have seen me would never know me. I have altered much these last two months."

"But what do you wish, Citizen?" asked the curé.

"You are going this morning to the Conciergerie, are you not?"

"Yes; the porter has sent for me."

"Do you know why?"

"To perform the duties of my sacred office to an invalid, or some dying person, perhaps even to one condemned."

"You are right; it is to one condemned."

The old priest regarded the Chevalier with undisguised astonishment.

"But do you know who this person is?" demanded Maison-Rouge.

"No; I do not know."

"This person is the queen!"

The abbé uttered an exclamation of grief.

"The queen! Oh, my God!"

"Yes, sir; the queen! I made inquiry as to the priest who would attend her, and learned it was you. I therefore came directly to seek an interview."

"But what do you require of me?" asked the priest, alarmed at the wild accents of the Chevalier.

"I wish — I wish nothing, sir. I implore, I entreat, I supplicate you!"

"For what, then?"

"To allow me to enter with you into the presence of her Majesty?"

"You are mad!" exclaimed the curé; "you would not only ruin me, but would sacrifice yourself."

"Fear nothing."

"The poor woman is condemned, and that is the end of her."

"I know it, and it is not to make any attempt to save her that I wish to see her; it is — But listen to me, my father; you are not listening."

"I do not listen to you, since what you ask is impossible; I do not listen to you, since you act like a man bereft of his senses," said the aged man. "I do not listen to you, because you terrify me."

"Father, reassure yourself," said the young man, endeavoring to calm himself; "believe me, Father, I am in my senses. The queen, I know, is lost; but if I could only for an instant prostrate myself at her feet, it would save my life. If I do not see her I shall kill myself; and as you will have caused my despair, you will at the same moment destroy both body and soul."

"My son! my son!" replied the priest, "you ask me to sacrifice my life for you! Old as I am, my existence is still necessary to the unfortunate; old as I am, to precipitate my own death is to commit suicide."

"Do not refuse me, Father," replied the Chevalier; "you must have a curate, an acolyte; take me, let me go with you."

The priest tried to maintain his firmness, which was beginning to give way.

"No, no!" said he; "this would be a dereliction of duty; I have sworn to the Constitution, and I am bound heart, soul, and conscience. The unhappy woman con-

demned to death is a guilty queen. I would accept death, if by so doing I could benefit a fellow-creature; but I will not depart from the path of duty."

"But," cried the Chevalier, "when I tell you, and again repeat, even swear to you, I do not want to save the queen; here by the Gospel, by the crucifix, I swear I do not go to the Conciergerie to prevent her death!"

"What is your motive, then?" said the old man, affected by such undisguised accents of despair.

"Hearken!" said the Chevalier, whose soul seemed to speak from his lips; "she was my benefactress; she is attached to me; to see me in her last moments will I feel sure prove a consolation to her."

"And this is all that you desire?" demanded the curé, yielding to these irresistible accents.

"Absolutely all."

"And you have woven no plot to attempt to rescue the condemned?"

"None. I am a Christian, Father; and if there rests in my heart a shadow of deceit; if I entertain any hope of her life, or try in any way to save it, — may God visit me with eternal damnation!"

"No, no!" said the curé; "I can promise nothing," as the innumerable dangers attendant on an act so imprudent returned to his mind.

"Now listen to me, Father!" said the Chevalier, in a voice hoarse with emotion; "I have spoken like a submissive child; I have not uttered one bitter word or uncharitable sentiment; no menace has escaped my lips. Yet now my head whirls; fever burns in my veins; now despair gnaws my heart; now I am armed. Behold! here is my dagger." And the young man drew from his bosom a polished blade which threw a livid reflection on his trembling hand. The curé drew back quickly.

"Fear nothing," said the Chevalier, with a mournful smile; "others, knowing you to be so strict an observer of your word, would have terrified you into an oath. But no! I have supplicated, and I still continue to supplicate, with hands clasped, my forehead in the dust, that I may see her for a single moment. Look! here is your guarantee!" And he drew from his pocket a billet which he presented to Girard, who opened it and read as follows: —

I, René, Chevalier de Maison-Rouge, declare by God and my honor, that I have by threats of death compelled the worthy curé of Saint Landry to convey me to the Conciergerie, notwithstanding his refusal and great repugnance to do so. In proof of which I have signed —

MAISON-ROUGE.

"It is well," said the priest; "but swear to me once again that you will be guilty of no imprudence. It is not sufficient that my life is saved, I am answerable also for yours."

"Think not of that," said the Chevalier. "Then you consent?"

"I must, since you so absolutely insist. You can wait outside, and when she comes to the wicket you will see her."

The Chevalier seized the hand of the old priest and kissed it with all the ardor and respect he would have kissed the crucifix.

"Oh!" murmured the Chevalier, "she shall die at least like a queen, and the hand of the executioner shall never touch her!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE CART.

Immediately after having obtained this permission from the curé of Saint Landry, Maison-Rouge withdrew into a cabinet, the door of which, being half opened, he had recognized as the priest's dressing-room. There his long beard and mustachios speedily disappeared under the stroke of the razor; and then only he was fully aware of his frightful pallor and altered appearance. It was terrible to behold. He re-entered perfectly calm, and seemed to have forgotten that notwithstanding the absence of his beard and mustachios, he might still probably be known at the Conciergerie. He followed the abbé, whom, during his momentary absence, two officials were seeking; and with the cool audacity which disarms suspicion, entered the iron gate at this time opening into the court of the Palace. He was, like the Abbé Girard, dressed in black, — sacerdotal habits at that period being abolished.

In the register-office they found about fifty persons assembled; some employed about the prison, some deputies, some commissaries, all waiting in the expectation of seeing the queen pass; there might be some mandataries and many idlers. Maison-Rouge's heart beat so violently when he found himself opposite the wicket that he heard not even the parley that ensued between the abbé, the gendarmes, and the porter. Only a man with a pair of scissors in his hand and a piece of stuff newly cut pushed against Maison-Rouge upon the threshold. He turned round and recognized the executioner.

"What do you want, Citizen?" demanded Sanson.

The Chevalier endeavored to repress the shudder which, in spite of himself, ran through his veins.

"You see, Citizen Sanson," replied the Chevalier, "that I accompany the curé of Saint Landry."

"Oh, very well!" said the executioner, drawing himself on one side, and giving orders to his assistant.

During this time Maison-Rouge had passed into the interior of the office, and from there into the compartment inhabited by the two gendarmes.

These men were overcome by contending emotions. Proud and haughty as she had been to others, she had ever been gentle and condescending to them. They seemed more like her servants than her guards.

In his present position the Chevalier could not obtain a view of the queen, — the screen was closed. It had been opened to give entrance to the curé, but directly closed behind him. When the Chevalier entered, the conversation had already commenced.

"Sir," said the queen, in a clear and firm voice, "since you have sworn allegiance to the Republic — in whose name they have condemned me to death — I have no confidence in you. We do not even worship the same God!"

"Madame," said Girard, struck by this disdainful profession of faith, "a Christian about to die should dismiss all hatred from her heart, and ought not to repulse her God, under whatever form he may be presented to her."

Maison-Rouge advanced a step to open the screen, hoping that when she saw him, and knew what brought him, she would change her opinion in regard to the curé; but the gendarmes detected the movement.

"But," said Maison-Rouge, "I am the acolyte of the curé —"

"Then, since she refuses the curé," said Duchesne, "she does not require you."

"But still, perhaps she may accept me," said he, raising his voice; "it is impossible she would refuse me." But Marie Antoinette was too much engrossed by the sentiment which agitated her either to hear or recognize the Chevalier's voice.

"Go, sir!" continued she; "leave me!" addressing Girard; "since at this time we in France live under the régime of liberty, I claim the right to die according to my own fashion."

Girard offered some resistance.

"Leave me, sir!" said she. "I desire you to leave me."

Girard endeavored to speak.

"I will not hear you; leave me!" said she, with the gesture of Marie Thérèse.

Girard went out.

Maison-Rouge essayed to gain a glimpse of her through the opening in the screen; but the prisoner had turned her back. The executioner's assistant crossed before the curé; he came in holding a cord in his hand. The two gendarmes pushed the Chevalier toward the door; amazed, despairing, and utterly bewildered, before he had been able to utter a cry or make the slightest movement to effect his purpose, he found himself with the curé in the corridor of the turnkey. This corridor brought them again into the register-office, where the news of the queen's refusal had already circulated, and where the Austrian pride of Marie Antoinette was to some the pretext of the coarsest invectives, and to others the subject of secret admiration.

"Go!" said Richard to the abbé, "return home, since she repulses you, and let her die as she likes."

"Well, she is in the right," said Richard's wife, "and I would act in the same way."

"Then you would do wrong, Madame," said the curé.

"Be silent," said the keeper, opening his eyes very wide; "what does it concern you? Go, Abbé, go!"

"No," said Girard, "no; I will, notwithstanding all, accompany her; one word, only one word, if she will listen, might bring her back to duty; besides, I am sent by the order of the Commune, and I must discharge my office."

"Send back your sexton, then," brutally observed the adjutant-major, commandant of the armed forces. He was a former actor at the Comédie Française, named Grammont. The eyes of the Chevalier flashed lightning, as he mechanically thrust his hand into his breast, where Girard knew he had the poniard. He checked him with a suppliant look.

"Spare my life," said he, in a low voice; "you see that your cause is ruined; do not destroy yourself with her. I will mention you to her on the route; I swear to you I will tell her you risked your life that you might see her once more on earth."

These words calmed the effervescence of the young man, and the ordinary reaction taking place, he sank into a state of quiescence. This man of heroic mind, of marvellous power, had arrived at the termination of both strength and will, and glided irresolute, or rather exhausted and vanquished, into a state of torpor that might have been imagined to be the precursor of death.

"Yes, I believe," said he, "it should be thus: the cross for Jesus, the scaffold for her, — gods and kings drink deep of the chalice presented to them by men." This thought produced resignation; and now, totally prostrated, he allowed himself to be pushed without offering

any resistance, except an occasional involuntary groan, to the outer gate, passive as Ophelia when, devoted to death, she found herself borne away by the remorseless waves.

At the bottom of the gates and at the doors of the Conciergerie, a crowd was assembled, which unless once seen it was impossible to describe. Impatience ruled every passion; and each passion spoke its own language; and these combined formed an immense and prolonged uproar, as if the whole noise and the entire population of Paris were on this occasion concentrated in the quarter of the Palais de Justice.

In front of this crowd the whole army was encamped, with guns intended to guard the procession, and also to secure the privilege of those who came to witness the last act of the tragedy.

It would have been vain to attempt to pierce this deep rampart, increasing gradually, since the condemnation of the queen was now known not only at Paris, but by the patriots of the faubourgs.

Maison-Rouge, expelled from the Conciergerie, naturally found himself in the first rank among the soldiers, who instantly demanded who he was. He replied, "he was the vicar of the Abbé Girard, but having bound himself by the same oath, he, like the curé, had been dismissed and refused by the queen;" on which the soldiers, in their turn, pushed him into the first row of spectators, where he was again compelled to repeat what he had previously told them.

Then the cry arose, "He has just left!" "He has seen her!" "What did she say?" "What did she do?" "Is she as haughty as usual?" "Is she cast down?" "Does she weep?" The Chevalier replied to all these questions in a feeble but sweet and affable tone; as if this

voice was the last manifestation of life suspended on his lips. His answer was couched in the language of truth and simplicity. It contained an eulogium on the firmness of Marie Antoinette; and that which he recounted with the simplicity and faith of an evangelist cast sorrow and remorse over many hearts.

When he spoke of the little dauphin, and of Madame Royale; of this queen without a throne; of this wife without a husband; this mother bereft of her children; this woman alone and abandoned, without a friend, surrounded by executioners, — more than one face here and there assumed a sad expression, and more than one tear of regret was clandestinely wiped from eyes a moment before animated by hatred.

The Palace clock struck eleven. All murmuring at this moment ceased. One hundred thousand human beings counted these strokes, echoed by the pulsations of their own hearts.

When the last vibration had ceased and died away in the distance, a loud noise was heard within the gates, and at the same time a cart, advancing from the side of the Quai aux Fleurs, broke through the crowd, then the guards, and drew up at the bottom of the steps.

The queen soon appeared at the top of the staircase. Looks expressive of all kinds of passion were bent upon her; the mob stood in breathless expectation. The queen's hair was cut short; the greater portion had turned gray during her captivity, and this shade of silver rendered still more delicate the mother-of-pearl pallor which at this moment lent an almost angelic beauty to this daughter of the Cæsars. She was attired in a white robe, and her hands were fastened behind her back. When she appeared with the Abbé Girard on her right, who notwithstanding all opposition would still accompany her.

and the executioner on her left, both dressed in black, there ran throughout the crowd a murmur, of which God alone, who reads all hearts, could comprehend and sum up the truth.

A man passed between the executioner and Marie Antoinette; it was Grammont. He conducted her to the fatal car. The queen recoiled.

"Mount!" cried Grammont.

This word was distinctly heard by all. Emotion held every breath suspended on the lips of the spectators. A blush suffused the face of the queen, mounting even to the roots of her hair, but it immediately disappeared, and her face resumed its former death-like hue.

"Why a car for me," said she, "when the king had a carriage to convey him to the scaffold?"

The Abbé Girard advanced, and addressed a few words to her in a low tone; doubtless he condemned this last utterance of royal pride. The queen remained silent, but tottered so much that Sanson held out his arms to support her; but she recovered her self-possession before he could touch her. She then descended the staircase, while the assistants placed a foot-board behind the car. The queen entered first; the abbé followed her.

When the car was in motion it caused a great movement in the assemblage; and the soldiers at the same time, ignorant of its cause, united their efforts to push back the crowd, and consequently, a large space was cleared between the people and the vehicle of death, when suddenly a mournful howling was heard. The queen started, and instantly rose, looking around her. She then saw her little dog, which had been lost for two months, and which, unable to follow her into the Conciergerie, regardless of kicks, blows, and thrusts, now rushed toward the car; but almost directly poor Jet, emaciated,

starving, and bruised, disappeared under the horses' feet. The queen followed him with her eyes; she could not speak, for her voice was drowned in the noise; she could not point her finger toward him, for her hands were tied; and had she been able to do either, who would have regarded her? Having closed her eyes for an instant, she soon revived. He was in the arms of a pale young man, who, standing on a cannon, was conspicuous above the crowd, and whose natural stature seemed enlarged from the unspeakable elevation of the sentiments with which he was animated, while he saluted the queen and pointed to heaven. Marie Antoinette looked upward and smiled sweetly.

The Chevalier uttered a groan, as if this smile had broken his heart; and as the fatal car turned toward the Pont-au-Change, he fell back among the crowd, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE SCAFFOLD.

Upon the Place de la Revolution, leaning against a lamp-post, two men were waiting. Of those who followed with the crowd, some were carried to the Place du Palais, others to the Place de la Revolution, while the rest spread, impatient and tumultuous, over the whole road separating the two places. They were waiting until the queen should reach the instrument of punishment, which, defaced by the sun and storm, worn by the hand of the executioner, and, most horrible! blunted by too frequent contact with its victims, reared its head with a sinister pride over the subjacent mass, like a queen ruling her people. The two men, arm-in-arm, and speaking by fits and starts, with pale lips and contracted brows, were Lorin and Maurice. Lost in the crowd, but not in a way calculated to excite suspicion, they continued in a low tone their conversation, which was perhaps not the least interesting one then circulating among the various groups which, like an electric chain, a living sea, was agitated from the Pont-au-Change to the Pont de la Revolution.

The idea we have expressed regarding the scaffold seemed to have struck them both.

"See," said Maurice, "how the hideous monster rears her red arms; might it not be said that she calls us, and grins at us through her wicket as if it was her horrid mouth?"

"I," said Lorin, "must confess I do not belong to the school of poetry which sees everything blood-color. I see

everything *couleur-de-rose*, and even at the foot of that dreadful machine I should sing and hope still. '*Dum spiro spero.*' "

"You hope when they murder women?"

"Maurice," said Lorin, "child of the Revolution, do not deny your mother! Ah! Maurice, remain a stanch and loyal patriot. She who is condemned to die is unlike all other women; she is the evil genius of France."

"Oh, it is not she that I regret; it is not for her I weep!" cried Maurice.

"Yes; I understand, it is Geneviève."

"Ah!" said Maurice, "there is one thought that drives me mad! It is that Geneviève is in the hands of those purveyors to the guillotine, Hébert and Fouquier Tinville, — in the hands of the men who sent here the poor Héloïse, and are now sending the proud Marie Antoinette."

"Well!" said Lorin, "it is this very fact that inspires me with hope. When the rage of the people has feasted on two tyrants it will be satiated for some time at least, — like the boa-constrictor, which requires three months to digest what he has devoured. Then the popular rage will swallow no more; and as is said by the prophets of the faubourg, 'the lesser morsels will be no longer palatable.'"

"Lorin! Lorin!" said Maurice, "I am more positive than you, and I say it in a whisper, but am ready to repeat it aloud, — Lorin, I hate the new queen who seems destined to succeed the Austrian, whom she destroys. It is a sad queen whose purple is daily dyed in blood, and to whom Sanson is prime minister."

"Bah! we shall escape her."

"I do not think so," said Maurice, shaking his head; "to avoid being arrested at your house we have no resource but to live in the street."

"Bah! we can quit Paris; there is nothing to prevent us. We need not complain. My uncle will await us at Saint Omer; money, passport, nothing will be wanting. There exists not the gendarme who shall arrest us; what do you think? We remain in Paris because we choose to do so."

"No; that is not correct, excellent friend, devoted and faithful as you are — You remain because I wish to continue here."

"And you wish to remain to discover Geneviève. Well! nothing is more simple, just, or natural. You think she is in prison; nothing more probable. You wish to keep watch over her, and on that account we cannot quit Paris."

Maurice drew a deep sigh; it was evident his thoughts were wandering.

"Do you remember the death of Louis XVI?" said he. "I can see him yet, pale with pride and emotion. I was then one of the chiefs of this crowd, in whose folds I conceal myself to-day. I was greater at the foot of the scaffold than the king upon it had ever been. What a change, Lorin! and when one thinks that nine short months have sufficed to work this change!"

"Nine months of love, Maurice — Love ruined Troy!"

Maurice sighed; his wandering thoughts now took another direction.

"Poor Maison-Rouge," said he; "this is a sad day for him!"

"Alas!" said Lorin, "shall I tell you what appears to me the most melancholy thing about revolutions?"

"Yes," said Maurice.

"It is that one often has for friends those we should prefer as enemies; and for enemies those we would wish — "

"There is one thing I can hardly believe," interrupted Maurice.

"What?"

"It is that he will not invent some project, though the most hopeless, to save the queen."

"What! one man stronger than a hundred thousand!"

"I said, 'though the most hopeless.' I know that to save Geneviève —" Lorin frowned.

"I again tell you, Maurice," said he, "you are wild! No; even were it possible for you to save Geneviève, you would not become a bad citizen. But enough of this, Maurice; they are listening to us. Look how the heads undulate; see! there is Sanson's valet raising himself from under his basket, and looking in the distance. The Austrian arrives."

In short, as if to accompany this undulation which Lorin had remarked, a shuddering, prolonged and increasing, pervaded the crowd. It was one of those hurricanes which commence with a whistle and terminate with a bellow. Maurice raised himself by the help of the lamp-post, and looked toward the Rue Saint Honoré.

"Yes," said he shuddering; "there she is." And another machine now made its appearance, almost as revolting as the guillotine. It was the fatal car.

On the right and left glittered the arms of the escort; while in front marched Grammont, replying with flashes of his sabre to the shouts and cries of some fanatics. But ever as the cart advanced these cries subsided under the haughty courage of the condemned.

Never had a countenance commanded more respect; never had Marie Antoinette looked more the queen. Her proud courage struck terror into those around her.

Indifferent to the exhortations of the Abbé Girard, who despite of her opposition accompanied her, her face

moved neither to the right nor left; her deep thought was as immutable as her look; even the jolting motion of the cart upon the uneven pavement did not by its violence disturb the rigidity of her demeanor. She might have been taken for a marble statue conveyed in the car, had it not been for her brilliant eyes, and her hair waving in the wind.

A silence equal to that of the desert fell suddenly upon the three hundred thousand spectators of this scene, witnessed by the heavens for the first time by the light of the sun.

In the place where Maurice and Lorin were standing they heard the creaking of the axles and the snorting of the horses.

The car stopped at the foot of the scaffold.

The queen, who doubtless was not thinking of this moment, recalled herself, and understood it all; she threw a haughty glance upon the crowd, and again beheld the pale young man she had previously seen standing on the cannon. He was now mounted on a wall, and repeated the respectful salutation he had before offered her as she left the Conciergerie. He then disappeared. Many persons seeing him, it was soon reported, from his being dressed in black, that a priest was in attendance on Marie Antoinette, to give her absolution ere she ascended the scaffold.

Further than that no one disturbed the Chevalier. In moments of highest concern, certain things are treated with marked deference.

The queen cautiously descended the steps from the car, supported by Sanson, who to the last moment, in accomplishing the task to which he himself appeared to be condemned, treated her with the greatest respect.

As the queen walked toward the steps of the scaffold

some of the horses reared, and several of the foot-guards and soldiers appeared to oscillate and lose their equilibrium; then a shadow was seen to glide under the scaffold; but tranquillity was almost instantaneously re-established, since no one was willing to quit his place at this solemn moment, — no one was willing to lose the minutest detail of the dreadful tragedy about to be accomplished. All eyes were directed toward the condemned.

The queen was already on the platform of the scaffold. The priest still continued to address her; an assistant moved her gently forward, while another removed the scarf from her shoulders.

Marie Antoinette felt the touch of the infamous hand upon her neck, and making a sudden movement trod upon Sanson's foot, who, without her having seen him, was engaged in fixing her to the fatal plank. Sanson drew back his foot.

"Excuse me, sir," said the queen; "I did not do it intentionally."

These were the last words pronounced by the daughter of the Cæsars, the queen of France, the widow of Louis XVI.

As the clock of the Tuileries struck a quarter after twelve, the queen was launched into eternity.

A terrible cry — a cry comprising at once joy, terror, sorrow, triumph, expiation — rose like a storm, drowning a feeble burst of lamentation which at the same moment issued from beneath the scaffold.

The gendarmes heard it notwithstanding, feeble as it was, and advanced some steps in front. The crowd, now less compact, expanded like a river whose dike has been enlarged, threw down the fence, dispersed the guards, and rushed like the returning tide to beat the foot of the scaffold, which was already shaking.

All wished for a nearer view of the remains of that royalty which they believed, root and branch, forever exterminated in France.

But the gendarmes had another object in view, — they sought the shadow which had repassed their lines, and glided beneath the scaffold.

Two of them returned leading between them by the collar a pale young man, whose hand held a blood-stained handkerchief, which he pressed to his heart; he was followed by a little spaniel howling piteously.

"Death to the aristocrat! death to the noble!" cried some men of the people; "he has dipped his handkerchief in the Austrian's blood, — to death with him!"

"Good Heavens!" said Maurice to Lorin, "do you recognize him? Do you recognize him?"

"Death to the royalist!" repeated the madmen; "take away the handkerchief he wishes to preserve as a relic! wrest it from him! tear it from him!"

A haughty smile flitted across the young man's lips, he tore open his shirt, bared his breast, and dropped the handkerchief.

"Gentlemen," said he, "this blood is not the queen's, but my own. Let me die in peace;" and a deep, gushing wound appeared widely gaping under the left breast. The crowd uttered one cry and retired. The young man sank slowly upon his knees, and gazed upon the scaffold as a martyr looks upon the altar.

"Maison-Rouge!" whispered Lorin to Maurice.

"Adieu!" murmured the young man, bowing his head with an angelic smile, — "adieu! or rather, *au revoir!*" and he expired in the midst of the stupefied guards.

"There is still this expedient, Lorin," said Maurice, "before becoming an unworthy citizen."

The little spaniel turned toward the corpse, terrified and howling lamentably.

"Why, there is Jet," said a man, holding a large club in his hand, — "why, there is Jet; come here, old fellow."

The dog advanced toward him, but was scarcely within arm's length of the man who had called him, when the brutal wretch raised his club and dashed out his brains, at the same time bursting into a hoarse laugh.

"Cowardly wretch!" cried Maurice.

"Silence!" whispered Lorin, "or we are lost. It is Simon."

CHAPTER L.

THE VISIT TO THE DOMICILE.

Lorin and Maurice returned to their home; but the latter, in order not to compromise his friend too openly, usually absented himself during the day, and returned at night.

In the midst of these events, being present at the removal of the prisoners to the Conciergerie, he watched daily for the sight of Geneviève, not having been yet able to discover her place of imprisonment. Lorin, since his visit to Fouquier Tinville, had succeeded in convincing Maurice that on the first ostensible act he was lost, and would then have sacrificed himself without having benefited Geneviève; and Maurice, who would willingly have thrown himself into prison in the hope of being united to his mistress, became prudent from the fear of being separated from her forever.

He went every morning from the Carmelites to Port Libre, from the Madelonnettes to Saint Lazare, from La Force to the Luxembourg; he stationed himself before the prisons to watch the cars as they came out to convey the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Then when he had scanned the victims, he proceeded to the other prisons to prosecute this hopeless search, for he soon became aware that the activity of ten men would prove inadequate to keep watch over the thirty-three prisons which Paris could boast of at this period. He therefore contented himself by going daily to the Tribunal, there to await the appearance of Geneviève.

He was already beginning to despair. Indeed, what hope was there for a person arrested and condemned? Sometimes the Tribunal, whose sittings commenced at ten o'clock, had condemned twenty or thirty people by four o'clock: those first condemned had six hours to live, but the last, sentenced at a quarter to four, fell at half-past beneath the axe. To resign himself to such a fate for Geneviève, would be to grow weary in his battle against destiny.

Oh, if he had known beforehand of the imprisonment of Geneviève, how Maurice would have baffled the blind, human justice of this epoch; how easily and promptly would he have torn Geneviève from prison! Never were escapes more easy; and it may be said, never were they so rare. All the nobles, once placed in prison, installed themselves there as in a château, and died at leisure. To fly was like evading a duel; the women even blushed at liberty acquired at this price.

But Maurice would not have shown himself so scrupulous. To kill the dogs, to bribe a door-keeper, what more simple? Geneviève was not one of those splendid names calculated to attract general attention. She would not dishonor herself by flying, and besides — when could she be disgraced!

Oh, how bitterly he thought of the gardens of Port Libre, so easy to scale; the chambers of Madelonnettes, so easy of access to the street; the low walls of the Luxembourg, and the dark corridors of the Carmelites, where a resolute man could so easily penetrate by opening a window.

But was Geneviève in one of these prisons?

Then, devoured by doubt, and worn out with anxiety, he loaded Dixmer with imprecations; he threatened, and nourished his hatred against this man, whose cowardly

vengeance concealed itself under an apparent devotion to the royal cause.

"I shall find him out too," thought Maurice; "for if he wishes to save the unhappy woman, he will show himself; if he wishes to ruin her, he will insult her. I shall find him out, the scoundrel! and it will be an evil day for him!"

On the morning of the day when the events occurred which we are about to relate, Maurice went out early to take his usual station at the Revolutionary Tribunal, leaving Lorin asleep.

Lorin was suddenly awakened by a loud noise at the door, the voices of women and the butt-ends of guns. He threw around him the startled glance of a surprised man who wished to convince himself that nothing that could compromise him was in view. Four sectionaries, two gendarmes, and a commissary entered at the same moment. This visit was sufficiently significant, and Lorin hastened to dress himself.

"Do you come to arrest me?" said he.

"Yes, Citizen Lorin."

"What for?"

"Because you are suspected."

"Ah, all right!"

The commissary scribbled some words at the bottom of the warrant for arrest.

"Where is your friend?" he inquired.

"What friend?"

"The Citizen Maurice Lindey."

"At home, probably."

"No; he lodges here."

"He! go along! Search, and if you find —"

"Here is the denunciation," interrupted the commissary, "it is plain enough;" offering Lorin a paper in

vile writing and enigmatical orthography. It stated that every morning the Citizen Lindey, suspected and ordered for arrest, was seen going out of the Citizen Lorin's house. The denunciation was signed "Simon."

"Why," said Lorin, "the cobbler will lose his custom if he follows two trades at the same time, — a spy and boot-mender. He is a Cæsar, this Monsieur Simon," and he burst into a fit of laughter.

"The Citizen Maurice, where is he?" asked the commissary. "We summon you to deliver him up."

"When I tell you he is not here!"

The commissary passed into the chamber adjoining, then ascended to the loft where Lorin's official slept, and at last opened a lower apartment, but found no trace of Maurice. But upon the dining-room table a recently written letter attracted the attention of the commissary. It was from Maurice, who had deposited it there on leaving in the morning without awakening his friend.

"I go to the Tribunal," said Maurice; "take breakfast without me. I shall not return till night."

"Citizens," said Lorin, "however anxious I may feel to obey your commands, I cannot follow you undressed. Allow my official to assist me."

"Aristocrat," said a voice, "do you require assistance to put on your breeches?"

"Oh, goodness! yes," said Lorin; "I resemble the Citizen Dagobert, — mind, I did not say king."

"Well, dress," said the commissary; "but make haste!"

The official came down to help his master to dress. However, it was not exactly that Lorin required a *valet-de-chambre;* it was that nothing might escape the notice of the official, and that consequently he might detail everything to Maurice.

"Now, gentlemen, — pardon, Citizens. Now, Citizens, I am ready, and will follow you; but permit me, I beg, to carry with me the last volume of 'Lettres à Émilie,' by Monsieur Demoustier, which has just appeared, and I have not read. It will enliven the hours of my captivity."

"Your captivity?" said Simon, sharply, now become municipal in his turn, and entering, followed by four sectionaries, "that will not last long. You figure in the trial of the woman who wanted to assist the Austrian to escape. They try her to-day; and to-morrow, when you have given your testimony, your turn will come."

"Cobbler," said Lorin, "you stitch your soles too quickly."

"Yes; but what a nice stroke from the leather-cutting knife!" replied Simon; "you will see, you will see, my fine grenadier!"

Lorin shrugged his shoulders.

"Well," said he, "let us go; I am waiting for you."

As each one turned round to descend the staircase Lorin bestowed on the municipal Simon so vigorous a kick that he sent him rolling and howling down the entire flight of stairs. The sectionaries could not restrain their laughter. Lorin put his hands in his pockets.

"In the exercise of my functions!" cried Simon, livid with rage.

"Zounds!" said Lorin, "are we not all here in the exercise of our functions?"

He got into the carriage, and was conducted by the commissary to the Palais de Justice.

CHAPTER LI.

LORIN.

If for the second time the reader is willing to follow us to the Revolutionary Tribunal, we shall find Maurice in the same place where we have already seen him, only now infinitely more pale and agitated.

At the moment our scene again opens upon the lugubrious theatre, whither we are led by a tissue of events rather than by our own inclinations, the jury were deliberating; a cause had just been tried. Two of the accused had already, by one of those insolent anticipations by which they ridiculed the judges, attired themselves for the scaffold, and were conversing with their counsel, whose words somewhat resembled those of a physician who despairs of the life of his patient.

The people of the Tribune were this day in a ferocious mood, calculated to excite the severity of the jury placed under the immediate surveillance of the gossips and inhabitants of the suburbs. The juries under these circumstances became more excited and energetic, resembling an actor who redoubles his efforts beneath the eyes of a censorious public.

Since ten in the morning five condemnations had already taken place under the decisions of these harsh and insatiable juries.

The two individuals who now found themselves on the [illegible] of the accused awaited the decisive moment when

"yes" or "no" would return them to life or doom them to death.

The audience, rendered savage by the daily occurrence of these spectacles, now become their favorite pastime, prepared them by exclamations and anticipations for the awful moment.

"There! there! look at the tall one!" said a beldam, who, not having a bonnet, wore a tricolored cockade as large as a hand on her head, — "there! is he not pale? One would swear he was already dead."

The condemned regarded the woman with a contemptuous smile.

"What do you say?" replied her neighbor; "why, he is smiling."

"Yes; on the wrong side of his mouth."

One of the men looked at his watch.

"What is the time?" inquired his companion.

"A quarter to one. This has lasted three quarters of an hour."

"The same as at Domfront, that unfortunate town, where you arrive at noon, and are hung in an hour."

"And the short one! the short one!" cried another person, "will he not be ugly when he sneezes in the sack?"

"Bah! it is done so quickly, you will barely have time to perceive it."

"Then we will demand the head from Sanson; one has a right to see it."

"Look! what a beautiful blue coat he has on. It is rather a pleasant thing that the poor can shorten the rich and well-dressed people."

Indeed, as the executioner had told the queen, the poor inherited the spoils of each victim; they were carried to La Salpêtrière, immediately after the execution, and dis-

tributed among the indigent; and there even the clothes of the unfortunate queen had been conveyed.

Maurice heard this whirlwind of words without paying any attention; for he was at this moment occupied by one engrossing thought, to the exclusion of all else. For several days his heart beat only at certain moments, and by fits and starts, as from time to time hope or fear appeared to suspend all vital action, and these perpetual oscillations to bruise the most tender sensibilities of his soul.

The jury returned to their places; and as had been fully anticipated, the president pronounced the condemnation of the two accused, who were directly removed, walking with a firm step and erect bearing, — for at this epoch every one learned to die boldly.

The solemn and sinister voice of the usher was again heard.

"The public prosecutor against the Citizeness Geneviève Dixmer."

A shudder ran through Maurice's frame, and a cold sweat bedewed his brow. The little door by which the accused entered suddenly opened, and Geneviève appeared. She was dressed in white; her ringlets were tastefully arranged, instead of being cut short, hanging in long masses of clustering curls. Doubtless, to the last moment poor Geneviève wished to appear beautiful to her lover, who might perchance be able to see her.

Maurice beheld Geneviève, and felt that all the strength he had collected was inadequate to this occasion, notwithstanding he had expected this blow, since for twelve days he had not omitted a single sitting, and three times already had the name of Geneviève proceeded from the mouth of the public prosecutor, and reached his ear. But there are certain griefs and miseries so profound

that it is quite impossible to sound the depths of the abyss.

All those who witnessed the appearance of this young female, so lovely, so pale and innocent, uttered a simultaneous cry; some of fury, — for at this period there existed a class of people who detested everything bordering on superiority of beauty, riches, or of birth, — others of admiration, and some of pity. Geneviève, doubtless, among all these cries had recognized one cry, amid all these voices had distinguished one voice, for she turned in the direction of Maurice, while the president, looking up at her from time to time, turned over the law papers of the accused.

At the first glance she discovered Maurice, concealed as his features were under the broad brim of his hat; and turning round with a sweet smile, and a gesture still more engaging, she pressed her rosy but trembling hands upon her lips, and depositing her whole soul with her breath, she gave wings to a last kiss, which only one in this vast crowd had the right to appropriate to himself.

A murmur of interest ran through the hall. Geneviève, recalled, turned toward her judges, but stopping suddenly in the midst of this movement, her eyes dilated, and became fixed with an undefinable expression of horror toward one point of the hall.

Maurice in vain raised himself on his toes; he saw nothing, or rather something of more consequence recalled his attention to the scene that was being enacted, — that is to say, to the Tribunal.

Fouquier Tinville had commenced reading the act of accusation. This act stated that Geneviève Dixmer was the wife of an obstinate conspirator suspected of having assisted the ex-Chevalier de Maison-Rouge in his succes-

sive attempts to rescue the queen. She had, besides, been surprised at the feet of the queen, entreating her to exchange garments with her, and offering to die in her stead. This absurd fanaticism, continued the act, merited, no doubt, the admiration of the counter-revolutionists; but in our day every French citizen owes his life to the nation; it is therefore double treason to sacrifice it to the enemies of France.

Geneviève, when asked if she acknowledged that she had knelt before the queen, as stated by the two gendarmes Gilbert and Duchesne, and had entreated her to exchange vestments, simply replied, "Yes."

"Then," said the president, "inform us of your plan, and what hope you entertained of its success."

Geneviève smiled.

"A woman might conceive hopes," said she, "but a woman could not form a plan like this of which I am the victim."

"How came you there, then?"

"Not of my own accord. I was compelled."

"Who compelled you?" demanded the public prosecutor.

"Those who menaced me with death if I did not obey;" and again the agitated look of the young woman was centred on that part of the hall invisible to Maurice.

"But to escape from this death which menaced you, did you not know that you faced that death which must result from your condemnation?"

"When I consented, the knife was at my throat, while the guillotine was only in perspective. I succumbed under present violence."

"Why did you not call for assistance? All good citizens would have defended you."

"Alas! sir," said Geneviève, in a voice at once so sad

and sweet that it caused Maurice's heart to beat tumultuously, "I had no one near me."

Commiseration succeeded to interest, as interest had succeeded to curiosity. Many heads were lowered, some to conceal their tears, many to allow them to flow freely.

Just then Maurice perceived on his left an immovable head and an inflexible countenance. It was Dixmer, standing dark, gloomy, and implacable, never for a moment losing sight of Geneviève or of the Tribunal.

The blood rushed to the young man's temples; rage mounted from his heart to his forehead, filling his whole being with intense desire for vengeance. He darted at Dixmer a look so replete with burning hate, so condensed and powerful, that he, as if attracted by the electric fluid, turned his head toward his enemy. Their glances encountered like two flashes.

"Tell us the names of your instigators," said the president.

"There was only one, sir."

"Who?"

"My husband."

"Do you know where he is?"

"Yes."

"Inform us of his retreat."

"He has been brutal, but I will not be cowardly. It is not for me to tell you his retreat, but for you to find him."

Maurice looked at Dixmer. He never moved. One idea flashed through the young man's brain. It was to denounce him at the same time that he denounced himself; but he quickly suppressed the thought.

"No," said he; "it is not thus that he should die."

"Then you refuse to assist us in our search?" said the president.

"I think, sir, I could not do so without rendering myself as contemptible in the eyes of others as he is in mine."

"Are there any witnesses?" demanded the president.

"There is one," replied the usher.

"Call the witness."

"Maximilien-Jean Lorin!" shouted the usher.

"Lorin!" cried Maurice, "Oh, my God! what has happened?"

This scene took place the same day that Lorin had been arrested, and Maurice was in utter ignorance of the fact.

"Lorin!" murmured Geneviève, looking round with anxious solicitude.

"Why does not the witness answer to the call?" demanded the president.

"Citizen President," said Fouquier Tinville, "upon a recent denunciation the witness was arrested at his own house; he will be brought directly."

Maurice started.

"There is another still more important witness," continued Fouquier; "but we have not yet been able to find him."

Dixmer turned toward Maurice smiling. Perhaps the same idea flitted through the mind of the husband which had before entered that of the lover.

Geneviève, pale and horror-stricken, uttered a low groan.

At this moment Lorin entered, followed by two gendarmes.

After him, and by the same door, Simon appeared, who came to take his seat in the judgment-hall, according to his custom in that locality.

"Your name and surname?" inquired the president.

"Maximilien-Jean Lorin."

"Your condition in life?"

"Independent."

"You will not remain so long," muttered Simon, shaking his fist at him.

"Are you related to the prisoner at the bar?"

"No; but I have the honor of being one of her friends."

"Are you aware that she conspired to carry off the queen?"

"How could I be aware of it?"

"She might have confided in you?"

"In me! a member of the section of the Thermopyles? A likely story!"

"Notwithstanding, you have sometimes been seen with her."

"I might have been seen with her often."

"Did you know that she was an aristocrat?"

"I knew her as the wife of a master-tanner."

"But her husband did not in reality follow the business which he pretended to."

"Of that I am ignorant; her husband was not one of my friends."

"Tell us what you know of this husband."

"Oh, very willingly. He is a villain, who —"

"Monsieur Lorin," said Geneviève, "for pity's sake!"

Lorin continued unmoved.

"He is a villain, who has sacrificed his wife, the poor woman before you, not so much to his political opinions as to his private hatred. Faugh! I look upon the brute as lower and more degraded even than Simon."

Dixmer became livid with rage. Simon wished to speak, but a gesture from the president imposed silence.

"You appear to know the whole history, Citizen Lorin," said Fouquier; "continue your testimony."

"Pardon me, Citizen Fouquier," said Lorin, rising; "I know nothing more." He bowed and reseated himself.

"Citizen Lorin," said Fouquier, "it is your bounden duty to enlighten this Tribunal."

"It has received all the light that I can give it. As to this poor woman, I repeat she has only acted under compulsion. Look at her! does she look like a conspirator? What she has done she was compelled to do. That is all."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"In the name of the law," said Fouquier, "I require that the witness Lorin shall be placed before this Tribunal as an accomplice of this woman."

Maurice groaned, while Geneviève buried her face in her hands.

Simon screamed out in a transport of joy, "Citizen Prosecutor, you are the savior of your country!"

As to Lorin, he leaped over the balustrade without making any reply, and seating himself near to Geneviève, took her hand, and respectfully kissed it, saying, "Good-day, Madame," with a coolness which electrified the assembly; "how do you do?"

Then he took his seat on the bench of the accused.

CHAPTER LII.

SEQUEL TO THE PRECEDING.

ALL this scene had passed before Maurice like a fantastic vision. Leaning upon the handle of his sword, which he had never quitted, he saw his friends precipitated one after another into that gulf which never yields back its victims; and this fatal sight so affected him that he asked himself why he, the companion of these unfortunates, should still cling to the brink of the precipice, and not surrender himself to the giddiness which was dragging him with them.

In leaping the balustrade Lorin saw the dark and sneering features of Dixmer.

When, as we have said, he had placed himself near Geneviève, she whispered in his ear.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said she, "do you know that Maurice is here?"

"Where?"

"Do not look round directly; one look might prove his ruin."

"Calm yourself."

"Behind us, near the door. What a trial for him if we are condemned!"

Lorin regarded the young woman with tender sympathy.

"We shall be," said he. "I conjure you not to doubt it. The deception would be too cruel if you were to permit yourself to hope."

"Oh, my God!" said Geneviève, "pity our poor friend, who will remain alone in the world!"

Lorin then turned round toward Maurice, and Geneviève also could not refrain from glancing at him.

His eyes were fixed upon them both, and one hand was placed upon his heart.

"There is one way to save you," said Lorin.

"Are you sure?" said Geneviève, her eyes sparkling with joy.

"Oh, of that one I am sure," replied Lorin.

"Oh, if you can save me how I will bless you!"

"But this way —" replied the young man.

Geneviève read his hesitation in his eyes.

"You have also seen *him?*" said she.

"Yes; I have seen him. Will you be saved? Let him, in his turn, take his seat in the iron arm-chair, and you will be safe." Dixmer, doubtless from Lorin's look and the expression of his countenance, divined what he uttered. He at first turned pale, but soon recovered his gloomy composure and satanic smile.

"Impossible!" said Geneviève; "I can no longer hate him."

"Say that he knows your generous nature, and defies you."

"No doubt; for he is sure of him, of me, of us all."

"Geneviève! Geneviève! I am less perfect than you. Let me bring him here! Let him perish!"

"No, Lorin, I conjure you. Nothing in common with that man, not even death. It seems to me I should be unfaithful to Maurice were I to die with Dixmer."

"But you will not die."

"How can I live when Maurice is to die?"

"Ah!" said Lorin, "Maurice has reason to love you; you are an angel, and heaven is the angels' home. Poor dear Maurice!"

In the mean time Simon, who could not overhear the

conversation between the accused, devoured their looks instead of their words.

"Citizen Gendarme," said he, "prevent those conspirators from continuing their plots against the Republic, even in the Revolutionary Tribunal."

"You know, Citizen Simon," replied the gendarme, "that here they conspire no more, and if they do so it will not be for long. These citizens are only conversing together; and since the law does not forbid them to do so in the car, why should it be forbidden at the Tribunal?"

This gendarme was Gilbert, who, having recognized the prisoner taken in the queen's chamber, avowed with his ordinary honesty the interest which he could not help according to her courage and devotion.

The president having consulted the court, at the request of Fouquier Tinville commenced his questions.

"Accused Lorin," demanded he, "of what nature was your acquaintance with the citizen Madame Dixmer?"

"Of what nature, Citizen President?

"The pure flame of friendship bound us one to another;
As a sister she loved me, and I her as a brother."

"Citizen Lorin," said Fouquier Tinville, "your poetry is out of season here, and the rhythm is bad."

"Why so?"

"You have one syllable too many."

"Cut it off! cut it off! Citizen Prosecutor! that is your trade, you know."

The imperturbable countenance of Fouquier Tinville assumed a pallid hue at this horrible pleasantry.

"And in what light," demanded the president, "did the Citizen Dixmer view this liaison of a professed Republican with his wife?"

"As to that I can tell you nothing, declaring that I

was never acquainted with the Citizen Dixmer, and never had any desire to be so."

"But," resumed Fouquier Tinville, "you did not tell us that your friend Maurice Lindey formed the link of this pure friendship between yourself and the accused?"

"If I did not say so," replied Lorin, "it was because it seemed to me wrong to speak of it; and I think that you might even follow my example."

"The citizen jurors," said Fouquier Tinville, "will appreciate this singular alliance between an aristocrat and two Republicans, and at the very moment when this aristocrat is convicted of the blackest plot that could be concocted against the nation."

"How should I know anything concerning this plot you speak of?" demanded Lorin, disgusted by the brutal stupidity of the argument.

"You were acquainted with this woman; you were her friend; you term yourself her brother; you speak of her as your sister, — and you were not cognizant of her proceedings? Is it then probable, as you have yourself remarked," continued the president, "that she would have committed alone this act imputed to her?"

"She did not commit it alone," replied Lorin, repeating the technical words used by the president; "since, as she has told you, and I have told you, and now repeat, her husband compelled her."

"Then how is it that you are not acquainted with the husband," said Fouquier Tinville, "since the husband was united with the wife?"

It remained only for Lorin to recount the first disappearance of Dixmer; to mention the amours of Geneviève and his friend; and, in short, to relate the manner in which Dixmer had carried off and concealed his wife in some impenetrable retreat, — it needed only this to ex-

culpate himself from all connivance, and to elucidate the whole mystery. But for this he must betray the secrets of his two friends; to do this would be to put Geneviève to shame before five hundred people. Lorin shook his head, as if saying "no" to himself.

"Well?" demanded the president, "what do you reply to the public prosecutor?"

"That his logic is crushing," said Lorin; "and I am now convinced of one thing which I never even suspected before."

"What is that?"

"That I am, as it appears, one of the most frightful conspirators that has ever been seen."

This declaration elicited a roar of laughter; even the jury could not refrain, so ludicrous was the young man's manner in enunciating these words.

Fouquier felt the ridicule; and since with his usual indefatigable perseverance he had managed to know all the secrets of the accused as well as they did themselves, he could not help feeling toward Lorin a sentiment of pity mingled with admiration.

"Come, Citizen Lorin," said he, "speak in your own defence. The Tribunal will lend a willing ear. We are acquainted with your previous conduct, and it has always been that of a stanch Republican."

Simon essayed to speak; but the president made him a signal to remain silent.

"Speak, Citizen Lorin!" said he; "we are all attention;" but Lorin only shook his head.

"This silence is confession," said the president.

"Not so," said Lorin; "silence is silence, that is all."

"Once more," said Fouquier Tinville; "will you speak?"

Lorin turned toward the audience to encounter the

eyes of Maurice, and to learn from them what course he would wish him to pursue; but Maurice made no sign to him to speak, and Lorin maintained his former silence. This was self-condemnation.

All that followed was quickly executed. Fouquier summed up his accusation; the president reviewed the evidence; the jury retired, and unanimously returned a verdict of "guilty" against Lorin and Geneviève.

The president condemned them both to suffer the penalty of death.

Two o'clock sounded from the great clock of the Palace.

The president had just time sufficient to pronounce the condemnation as the clock struck.

Maurice heard the two with a sense of confusion and utter bewilderment.

When the vibration had ceased, his strength was utterly exhausted. The gendarmes led away Geneviève and Lorin, who had offered her his arm.

Both saluted Maurice, but in different ways. Lorin smiled; but Geneviève, pale and fainting, wafted him a last kiss upon her fingers, bathed in tears.

She had till the last moment clung to the hope of life, and now wept, not the loss of her life, but of her love, which must perish with her.

Maurice, half mad, had not replied to his friends' farewell. He rose, pale and bewildered, from the bench on which he had fallen. His friends had disappeared.

He felt only one sentiment alive within him. It was the hatred which was gnawing at his heart.

He threw a last look around him and recognized Dixmer, who was leaving with the rest of the spectators, and at that moment stooped to pass under the arched door of the passage.

With the rapidity of a steel spring when it unbends, Maurice sprang from bench to bench, and reached the door.

Dixmer had already passed through, and descended into the darkened corridor. Maurice followed behind him. At the moment Dixmer planted his foot on the pavement of the grand hall, Maurice tapped him on the shoulder.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE DUEL.

At this epoch it was always a serious thing to feel a touch upon the shoulder. Dixmer turned, and recognized Maurice.

"Ah! good-day, Citizen Republican," said Dixmer, without evincing any other emotion than an almost imperceptible start, which he immediately repressed.

"Good-day, Citizen Coward," replied Maurice. "You were waiting for me, were you not?"

"That is to say," replied Dixmer, "that, on the contrary, I had ceased to expect you."

"Why was that?"

"Because I expected you sooner."

"I still arrive too soon for you, assassin!" added Maurice, with a murmured growl rather than a voice, since it resembled the grumbling of a storm gathered in his heart, his looks being like the lightning's flashes.

"You fling fire from your eyes, Citizen," replied Dixmer. "We shall be recognized, and followed."

"Yes; and you fear to be arrested, do you not? You dread lest you might be conducted to the scaffold where you send others. Let them arrest us, so much the better; for it seems to me that the life of one guilty wretch was due to national justice."

"As there is one name the less on the list of people of . Is it not so — since yours has disappeared?"

"Well, we shall speak about all that again, I hope; but, in the mean time, you are avenged — miserably avenged — upon a woman. Why, since you have waited for me elsewhere, did you not do so at my house, when you stole away Geneviève?"

"You were the first thief, I believe."

"Neither by your wit nor your words have I ever known you, sir. I know you better by your actions, — witness the day when you wanted to murder me. That day your true nature spoke."

"And I have more than once regretted that I did not listen to it," answered Dixmer, coolly.

"Well," said Maurice, touching his sword, "I offer you your revenge."

"To-morrow, if you like, but not to-day."

"And why to-morrow?"

"Or this evening."

"Why not directly?"

"Because I am engaged till five o'clock."

"Another hideous project!" said Maurice; "another ambush!"

"Really, Monsieur Maurice, you are rather ungrateful!" replied Dixmer. "In truth you are. Here, for six months, I have allowed you to make love to my wife; for six months have permitted your meetings, and have not noticed your smiles. Never man, you must confess, has evinced so little of the tiger in his composition as myself."

"That is to say, you thought I might be useful, and you could mould me to your purpose."

"Without doubt," returned Dixmer, calmly, who ruled his own passion as much as Maurice was carried away by his. "Without doubt; while you were betraying your Republic, and were selling it to me for a look from my

wife; while you were dishonoring yourselves, — you by your treason, she by her adulterous love, — I remained the sage and hero. I waited, and I triumphed."

"Horrible!" said Maurice.

"Is it not? Yes; you appreciate your own conduct fully, sir. It is horrible! — it is infamous!"

"You deceive yourself, sir; the conduct I term horrible and infamous is that of the man to whom the honor of a woman had been confided, who had sworn to guard this honor pure and unsullied, and who, instead of keeping his word and oath, employed her beauty as a shameful bait to ensnare a feeble heart. It was your sacred duty beyond all others to protect this woman, and instead of protecting her, you have sold her."

"What I had to do, sir," replied Dixmer, "I will tell you. I had to save my friend who united with me in this sacred cause. Even as I have sacrificed my property to this cause, so have I sacrificed my honor. As for me, I have completely forgotten, completely effaced myself. Now my friend is no more; he has died by the poniard. My queen is no more; she has died ignominiously on the scaffold. Now! now! I can think of revenge."

"Say of assassination."

"One cannot assassinate an adulteress; when she is killed, she is but punished for her crime."

"This sin you imposed upon her, therefore it was rendered lawful."

"You think so?" said Dixmer, with a sardonic smile. "Judge from her remorse if she believes she has acted lawfully."

"Those who punish strike openly. You, you do not punish; for while striking you fly, and while casting her head to the guillotine you conceal yourself."

"I fly! I hide myself! when did you see that, poor

idiot that you are?" demanded Dixmer. "Is concealing myself to be present at her condemnation? Is it lying when I go into the Salle des Morts to fling her my last adieu?"

"You are going to see her again, — to fling her a last adieu?" cried Maurice.

"Decidedly you are not expert at revenge, Citizen," replied Dixmer, shrugging his shoulders. "Thus, in my situation you would abandon these events to their strength alone, these circumstances to their natural course; thus, for example, the adulterous woman having merited death, the moment she has received the punishment of death I am quits with her, or rather she is quits with me. No, Citizen Maurice; I know better than that. I have discovered a way to return this woman all the evil she has done me. She loves you, and will die far from you; she detests me, and I will be near her. There!" said he, drawing a pocket-book from his pocket, "do you see this? It contains a card signed by the registrar of the Palace. With this card I can gain near access to the condemned. I will penetrate to Geneviève; I will call her 'Adulteress!' I shall see her curls fall under the hand of the vile executioner, and as they are severed she shall still hear my voice hissing, 'Adulteress!' I will even accompany her to the fatal car, and as she plants her foot upon the scaffold, the last sound that greets her ear shall be the word 'Adulteress!'"

"Take care! she will not have strength to support so much cowardice; she will denounce you."

"No," cried Dixmer, "she hates me too much for that. If she had wished to denounce me she would have done so when her friend urged her so softly. If she did not denounce me to save her life, she will not do so that I may die with her; for she well knows in that case I should

retard her execution for a day. She well knows that if she denounces me, I shall go with her not only to the lowest step of the Palace, but even to the scaffold; she well knows that instead of leaving her at the foot of the ladder, I shall ascend into the car with her, and that, seated by her side, the whole length of the road I shall constantly repeat the one dreadful word 'Adulteress;' that even on the scaffold I shall continue to do so till the moment she sinks into eternity and the accusation falls with her."

Dixmer was frightful in this state of anger and hatred. He seized Maurice by the hand and shook it with a force unknown to the young man, upon whom this had acted with a contrary effect; as Dixmer became excited, Maurice grew calm.

"Listen!" said the young man, "in your vengeance you have omitted one thing."

"What?"

"That you will be able to tell her, 'On leaving the Tribunal, I have seen your lover, and have killed him.'"

"On the contrary, I prefer telling her that you live, and will suffer for the remainder of your days from the spectacle of her death."

"You shall kill me, notwithstanding," said Maurice; "or," added he, turning round and finding himself nearly master of his position, "I will kill you!"

And pale with emotion, and excited by fury, finding his strength redoubled from the restraint he had imposed upon his feelings while listening to the unfolding of Dixmer's horrible project, he seized him by the throat and drew him backward toward a stair which led to the high bank of the river. At the contact with his hand, Dixmer, in his turn, felt hatred rush over him like hot lava.

"You need not compel me by force, I will follow."

"Come, then. You are armed."

"I will follow you."

"No, go first; but I give you notice, at the least sign or gesture I will cleave your skull with my sword."

"You know I am a stranger to fear," said Dixmer, with a smile rendered frightful from his pallor.

"Fear of my sword," said Maurice, "no; but fear of losing your revenge; and now that we are face to face you may bid it adieu."

They had, indeed, arrived at the water's brink; and had any one seen and followed them, he could not have arrived in time to prevent the duel from taking place, since an equal desire for vengeance now animated both. While speaking, they had descended the short stair leading to the Palace square, and gained the nearly deserted quay; for as the condemnations continued, seeing it was two o'clock at least, the crowd still filled the judgment-hall, the corridors, and the courts.

They appeared equally to thirst for each other's blood.

They plunged under one of those arches leading from the cells of the Conciergerie to the river; at this time drained, but then foul and saturated with blood, serving more than once as a means of conveyance for the corpses, which floated far away from the dungeons, leaving no trace behind.

Maurice placed himself between Dixmer and the water.

"I decidedly think I shall kill you, Maurice," said Dixmer, "you tremble so much."

"And I, Dixmer," said Maurice, taking his sword in hand and carefully enclosing him so as to cut off all retreat, — "I, on the contrary, believe that I shall kill you; and having killed you, shall remove from your pocket-

book the pass signed by the registrar of the Palace. Nay, you need not button your coat; my sword shall open it, I will be bound, were it even formed of brass like the cuirasses of old."

"And this paper," roared Dixmer, "you will take it, will you?"

"Yes," said Maurice; "I will use the pass. With this talisman I will secure an entrance to Geneviève. I will sit next her in the car; I will murmur in her ear while her life remains, 'I love thee;' and when the last stroke has fallen, I will murmur still, 'I loved thee.'"

Dixmer made a movement with his left hand to take the pass from his pocket, and together with the pocket-book to cast it into the river, when rapid as a thunder-bolt, and trenchant as a hatchet, Maurice's sword fell upon his hand, nearly severing it from the wrist. The wounded man uttered a cry, and shaking his mutilated limb, flung himself furiously on his antagonist.

Then in the obscurity of this gloomy vault the deadly combat commenced. The two men, enclosed in a space so narrow that the sword strokes could not diverge from the line of the body, slid upon the humid pavement, and with difficulty supported themselves by the sides of the arch; the impatience of the combatants caused them to redouble their blows. Dixmer, who, as he felt his life-blood flow, was aware that his strength diminished, charged Maurice so furiously that the latter was compelled to step backward; in so doing he lost his footing, and his enemy's sword grazed his breast. But by a movement rapid as thought, kneeling as he was, he raised the blade with his left arm and turned the point toward Dixmer, who, maddened with rage, darted forward, and impelled by the inclining ground, fell on the sword, the point of which entered his body. He uttered a fearful

imprecation, and the two bodies rolled to the outside of the arch.

One only rose. It was Maurice, — Maurice covered with blood, but with the blood of his enemy.

He drew his sword toward him, and as he drew it the remnant of life which still agitated with a nervous shuddering the limbs of Dixmer, ceased.

Then, when assured that he was dead, Maurice stooped toward the corpse, opened the dead man's coat, withdrew the pass, and hurried away directly.

But on looking at himself he felt assured that in his present state he should not proceed far without being arrested. He was literally covered with blood.

He approached the water's edge, and bending toward the river, washed his hands and coat. He then rapidly ascended the steps, casting a last look toward the arch, from whence a red, smoking stream issued, advancing slowly toward the river.

On approaching the Palace he opened the pocket-book, and there found the pass signed by the registrar.

"Thanks, just God!" murmured he, and he rapidly mounted the steps leading to the Salle des Morts.

It struck three.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE SALLE DES MORTS.

It will be remembered that the registrar of the Palace had opened his jailer's book to Dixmer, and had also entered into an arrangement with him which the presence of Geneviève rendered peculiarly agreeable. This man, it may be imagined, was terribly alarmed when the news of Dixmer's plot was communicated to him. He would doubtless be considered as nothing less than an accomplice of Dixmer, his false colleague, and would therefore be condemned to die with the wretched Geneviève. Fouquier Tinville had summoned him to appear before him.

It may easily be understood that this poor man would have some trouble to prove himself innocent in the eyes of the public prosecutor; he had, however, succeeded in so doing, thanks to Geneviève, whose declaration had clearly established his utter ignorance of the plot of her husband. He had succeeded, thanks to Dixmer's flight, and above all from the interest excited in Fouquier Tinville, who wished to preserve his administration free from all stain.

"Citizen," said he, flinging himself upon his knees before Fouquier, "pardon me, for I have been deceived."

"Citizen," replied the public prosecutor, "an employee of the nation who in these days permits himself to be deceived deserves to be guillotined."

"I may have been a blockhead, Citizen," replied the registrar, who was longing to call Fouquier Tinville "Monseigneur."

"Blockhead or not," replied the rigid prosecutor, "no one should allow his love for the Republic to sleep. The spies of the Capitol were only geese, yet they were sufficiently awake to save Rome."

The registrar looked upon this argument as totally unanswerable; he groaned, and remained waiting.

"I pardon you," said Fouquier Tinville. "I will go so far as to defend you, since I do not wish one of my employees to be even suspected; but you will bear in mind that at the least word that reaches my ears, the least revival of this affair, you shall go to the scaffold."

It is scarcely necessary to say with what anxiety this man sought the newspapers, always in haste to tell what they know, and sometimes more than they can certify, even should they cause the heads of ten men to fall by the guillotine.

He sought Dixmer everywhere, to recommend him to keep his own counsel; but Dixmer had very naturally changed his apartments, and was nowhere to be found.

Geneviève had been placed on the bench of the accused, and had already, in her testimony, declared that neither herself nor husband had any accomplices; and he thanked the poor woman with his eyes as she passed before him on her way to the Tribunal.

When she had passed, and he was returning to the office to fetch some law papers for Fouquier Tinville, he all at once saw Dixmer approaching him with a calm and quiet step.

This vision petrified him.

"Oh!" said he, as if he had seen a spectre.

"Do you not know me?" said the new-comer.

"Of course, I do. You are the Citizen Durand, or rather the Citizen Dixmer."

"Just so."

"But are you a dead man, Citizen?"

"Not yet, as you see."

"I mean to say that they will arrest you."

"Who wants to arrest me? — no one knows me."

"But I know you; and it only needs one word from me to send you to the guillotine."

"And two words from me to send you there with me."

"It is shameful of you to say that."

"No; it is logic."

"But what is your business? Make haste, — speak quickly; for the less time we are together the less danger we incur from each other."

"My wife is about to be condemned, is it not so?"

"I greatly fear for her, poor woman!"

"Well, I wish to see her once more, to bid her adieu."

"Where?"

"In the Salle des Morts."

"Would you dare to enter there?"

"Why not?"

"Oh!" said the registrar, like a man whose hair stood on end at the very thought.

"There must be some way," continued Dixmer.

"To enter the Salle des Morts? Without doubt there is."

"How?"

"To procure a pass."

"And where are these passes to be procured?"

The registrar turned frightfully pale, and stammered, "Where are they to be procured, you ask?"

"I inquire where are they to be procured?" replied Dixmer; "the question is plain enough, I think."

"They are procured — here."

"Ah! true; and who usually signs them?"

"The registrar."

"But you are the registrar?"

"Certainly I am."

"Oh, how lucky that is!" said Dixmer, seating himself, "you will sign me a pass."

The registrar made one bound.

"Do you ask for my head, Citizen?" said he.

"No; I ask you for a pass, that is all."

"I shall have you arrested, unhappy man!" said he, summoning all his energy.

"Do," said Dixmer; "and the next moment I will denounce you as an accomplice, and instead of leaving me to go alone to the famous hall, you shall accompany me."

The registrar turned ghastly pale.

"Villain!" said he.

"There is no villany in that," said Dixmer; "I wish to speak to my wife, and all I require of you is a pass to enable me to do so."

"Is it then so imperative that you should speak to her?"

"It seems so, since I risk my head to do so."

This appeared very plausible to the registrar, and Dixmer immediately perceived that he was relenting.

"Rest assured," said he, "no one shall know anything. The devil! why surely sometimes a similar case to mine must present itself to your notice!"

"Very rarely; it is by no means a common occurrence. But, let me see; let us arrange it in another way."

"If it is possible, I should ask nothing better."

"Nothing is more possible. Enter by the door of the condemned; there a card is not required. Then, when

you have spoken to your wife, call me, and I will let you out."

"Not a bad idea," said Dixmer; "but unfortunately there is a story current in the city."

"What story?"

"The history of a poor hunchback who mistook the door, thinking to enter the archives, but instead of so doing found himself in the hall of which we are now speaking. Only since he had entered by the door of the condemned instead of the large door, as he had no pass to prove his identity, once there he was not permitted to go out. They strenuously maintained that since he entered the door with the other condemned, he was condemned likewise. In vain he protested, swore, appealed; no one believed him, no one came to his assistance, no one helped him to get out. So that, notwithstanding his protestations, his oaths, and supplications, the executioner first cut off his hair, and afterward his head. Is this anecdote true, Citizen Registrar? You ought to know better than any one else."

"Alas! yes; it is too true," said the registrar, trembling.

"You must see then that with such a precedent I should be a fool to enter this cut-throat place without a pass."

"But I shall be there, I tell you."

"But if you should happen to be called away; if you should be otherwise engaged; if you should forget?"

Dixmer laid particular stress on these last words, "if you should forget."

"But since I promise you —"

"No; besides it would compromise you. They would see you speaking to me; and, in short, it does not suit me. I therefore prefer a pass."

"Impossible!"

"Then, dear sir, I will speak; and we shall both take a ride together to the Place de la Revolution."

The registrar, bewildered, stupefied, half-dead with terror, signed a pass for a "citizen."

Dixmer rose and went out precipitately to take his station in the judgment-hall, where we have already seen him. The rest is known to us.

At the same moment the registrar, to avoid all accusation of connivance, went and seated himself near Fouquier Tinville, leaving the management of the office to his head clerk.

At ten minutes to three, Maurice, furnished with the pass, crossing a hedge of turnkeys and gendarmes, arrived without interruption at the fatal door.

When we say fatal, we exaggerate, for there were two doors, — the principal one by which those possessing passes entered and returned; and the door of the condemned, by which no one departed except to the scaffold.

The place that Maurice entered was divided into two compartments. One of these was set apart for those employed in registering the name of the arrivals; the other, furnished only with wooden benches, was appropriated for the reception of those who were arrested and those who were condemned, which amounted to pretty nearly the same thing.

The hall was very dark, lighted only from the panes of the partition which divided it from the register-office.

A female dressed in white, in a half-fainting attitude, lay in a corner, supported against the wall.

A man was standing in front of her, from time to time shaking his head. His arms were crossed upon his breast, and he hesitated to speak to her, as if fearful of restoring her to the consciousness she appeared to have lost.

Around these two individuals several condemned persons were scattered promiscuously, — some giving vent to their feelings in sobs and groans, others joining in patriotic songs, while the remainder walked rapidly up and down, as if to chase away the thoughts which devoured them.

This was indeed the antechamber of death, and the furniture rendered it worthy of the name. Here were seen half-opened coffins filled with straw, seeming as if to invite the living to their beds of repose, the receptacles provided for the ashes of the dead.

There was a large closet opposite the partition. A prisoner, prompted by curiosity, opened it, but recoiled horror-struck. It contained the blood-stained garments of those executed on the preceding evening; long tresses of hair hanging here and there, the executioner's perquisites, who sold them to the relatives when not enjoined by the authorities to burn these precious relics.

Maurice, trembling with emotion, had hardly opened the door, when the whole tableau at once presented itself to his view. He advanced three steps into the hall, and fell at Geneviève's feet. The unfortunate woman uttered a cry, which Maurice stifled on her lips.

Lorin, weeping, pressed his friend in his arms; these were the first tears he had shed.

Strange that all these unhappy individuals, assembled to die together, scarcely looked at the touching tableau presented to their view by their unfortunate fellow-creatures! Every one suffered too much himself to take part in the miseries of others.

The three friends remained for a moment united in a silent embrace, happy, almost joyous. Lorin was the first of the ill-fated group to disengage himself.

"... you, then, condemned also?" said he to Maurice.

"Yes," replied he.

"Oh, happiness!" murmured Geneviève.

But the joy of those who have only one hour to live cannot last even as long as their lives. Maurice, having contemplated Geneviève with looks of ardent and profound affection, and having thanked her for the expression, at once so egotistical and so tender, which had just escaped her, turned toward Lorin.

"Now," said he, taking Geneviève's hands within his own, "let us talk together."

"Yes," said Lorin; "let us converse while the time remains to us. It is only right so to do. What do you wish to say to me, Maurice?"

"You have been arrested for my sake, condemned on account of her. As for Geneviève and me, we are paying our debt; it is not fair, at the same time, that you should be made to pay also."

"I do not understand you."

"Lorin, you are free."

"I free? You are mad!" said Lorin.

"No, I am not mad; I repeat that you are free. See, here is a pass. They will inquire who you are; you are employed at the registrar-office of the Carmelites, and are going to speak to the registrar of the Palace; you have, from motives of curiosity, requested a pass from him to see the condemned; you have seen them, and are now leaving, perfectly satisfied with your visit."

"This is a joke, is it not?"

"No, indeed, my friend; here is the pass, take advantage of it. You are not a lover, like myself; you do not need to die that you may be enabled to pass a few more minutes in the society of the well-beloved of your heart, and not to lose a second of eternity with her."

"But, Maurice," replied Lorin, "if one might be able

to get out from here — a circumstance I swear to you I could not have believed possible — why do you not first save the lady? As to yourself, we will consider afterward about that."

"Impossible!" said Maurice, with a frightful oppression at his heart, "this card is for a man, not for a lady; besides, Geneviève would not depart, and leave me here, to live herself, while knowing that I remained to die."

"If she would not, then why should I? Do you imagine I possess less courage than a woman?"

"No, dear friend; I know and acknowledge your bravery, but nothing can excuse your obstinacy in this case. Then profit by this moment, and allow us the supreme felicity of knowing and feeling that you are free and happy."

"Happy!" exclaimed Lorin; "you are facetious, surely? Happy without you, eh? What the devil am I to do in this world without you; in Paris, without my usual avocations? Never to see you again, never to weary you more with my doggerel rhymes, — ah, good faith, no!"

"Lorin, my friend —"

"Exactly; it is because I am your friend that I persist in my opinion. With the prospect of recovering you both, were I a prisoner as I now am, I would tear down the walls; but to save myself, and go out from here alone into the streets, my head bowed down with a feeling resembling remorse, and a continual cry in my ears: 'Maurice! — Geneviève!' To pass into certain quarters and before certain houses where I have seen your persons, but shall now only recognize your shadows; to come at last to such an extremity of despair as to execrate this dear Paris that I have loved so well; ah, by my faith,

no! And I find there was good reason for proscribing kings, were it only on account of King Dagobert."

"And what relation has King Dagobert with what concerns us?"

"What? Did not this frightful tyrant say to the great Éloi, 'The best company must part?' Ah, well! I am a Republican, and I say that nothing should make us quit good company, not even the guillotine; I feel very comfortable here, and here I will remain."

"My poor friend! my poor friend!" said Maurice.

Geneviève said nothing, but looked at them with eyes bathed in tears.

"You regret to lose your life, then?" said Lorin.

"Yes, on her account."

"I am not in the least sorry at losing mine, not even on account of the Goddess Reason, who, I had forgotten to tell you, has latterly behaved most shamefully to me; who will not take the trouble even to console herself, like the other Arthémise of old. I shall go to my death perfectly cool and rather facetious. I will amuse all the beggarly wretches who follow the car. I will repeat a pretty quatrain to Monsieur Sanson, and wish the company good-night, — that is to say — wait! —" Lorin interrupted himself. "Ah! to be sure," said he, "I will go out. I well knew that I loved no one, but I forgot that I hated some one. The time, Maurice, the time?"

"Half-past three."

"I have time, Heaven! there is time."

"Certainly," cried Maurice; "there are nine more accused persons still to be tried, this will not terminate before five o'clock; we have therefore nearly two hours' respite."

"That is all that I require; give me your pass, and lend me twenty sous."

"*Mon Dieu!* what are you going to do?" murmured Geneviève. Maurice pressed his hand. The all-important thing for him was that Lorin was going out.

"I have my own plan," said Lorin.

Maurice drew his purse from his pocket, and placed it in his friend's hand.

"Now, the pass, for the love of God! — I ought to say for the love of the Supreme Being."

Maurice gave him the pass.

Lorin kissed Geneviève's hand, and availing himself of the moment when a fresh batch of the condemned were ushered in, he leaped the benches, and presented himself before the principal entrance.

"Eh!" said the gendarme, "here is one, it appears to me, trying to escape."

Lorin drew himself up and presented his pass.

"Hold, Citizen Gendarme," said he, "and learn to know people better."

The gendarme recognized the signature of the registrar, but belonging to a class of functionaries rather wanting in confidence, and as at this moment the registrar himself came down from the Tribunal with a nervous shudder, which had not left him since he had so imprudently hazarded his signature, —

"Citizen Registrar," said he, "here is a pass bearing your signature, with which this person wishes to leave the Salle des Morts, is it all right?"

The registrar turned pale with fright, and feeling convinced that if he turned his eyes in that direction it would only be to encounter the terrible look of Dixmer, hastily seized the card and replied, —

"Yes, yes, it is my signature."

"Then," cried Lorin, "if it is your signature, return it to me."

"No;" said the registrar, tearing it into a thousand pieces; "these cards can be available only once."

Lorin remained for a moment irresolute.

"So much the worse," said he; "but above all things it is necessary I should kill him;" and he passed through the office.

Maurice had followed Lorin with an emotion easy to comprehend. When he had disappeared, Maurice returned, saying with an exultation nearly amounting to joy, "He is saved! Geneviève; the card is destroyed, therefore he cannot enter. Besides, even if he were able to gain admission, the sitting of the Tribunal will have terminated. At five o'clock, he will return; but we shall have ceased to live."

Geneviève shuddered, and breathed a deep sigh.

"Oh, press me in your arms," said she, "and let us separate no more! Why is it not possible, oh, my God! for one blow to annihilate us both, that together we might breathe our last sigh?"

Then retiring into the depth of the gloomy hall, Geneviève placed herself near Maurice, and twined her arms round his neck. Thus they remained, rendered by the strength of their love insensible to the surrounding scene, almost to the approach of death itself.

Half an hour passed thus.

CHAPTER LV.

WHY LORIN WENT OUT.

SUDDENLY a loud noise was heard; the gendarmes entered by the lower door, behind them appearing Sanson and his assistants, the latter carrying rolls of cord.

"Oh, my love!" said Geneviève, "the fatal moment has arrived, and I feel that my senses are leaving me!"

"There you are wrong," said the cheering voice of Lorin.

> "That you are wrong is plain, you see;
> For what is death but to be free?"

"Lorin!" cried Maurice, in despair.

"They are not good, are they? I have adopted your opinion since yesterday; I can only make contemptible —"

"Ah! that is the question. You are returned, unhappy man, you are returned!"

"I considered that was our agreement But listen, as what I have to say to you will also interest the lady."

"My God! my God!"

"Allow me to speak, or I shall not have time to tell you all. I wished to go out that I might purchase a knife in the Rue de la Baullerie."

"What did you want with a knife?"

"I wished to despatch this nice Monsieur Dixmer."

Geneviève shuddered.

"Ah!" said Maurice, "I comprehend."

"I purchased it. Listen attentively to what I said to and you will understand your friend has a mind

for logic; indeed, I begin to think I should have been a mathematician instead of a poet. Unfortunately, it is now too late. This is the way I reasoned: Monsieur Dixmer has compromised his wife; Monsieur Dixmer was present at her trial; and Monsieur Dixmer will not deprive himself of the pleasure of seeing her pass in the fatal car; especially as we accompany her. I will then look out for him among the foremost of the spectators. I will glide near him, and say, 'Good-day, Monsieur Dixmer;' and I will plunge my knife into his heart."

"Lorin!" cried Geneviève.

"Compose yourself, dear friend; Providence had arranged all. Picture to yourselves the spectators, instead of remaining stationary in front of the Palace, according to their usual custom, made a half-turn to the right, and lined the quay. 'Oh!' said I to myself, 'it is doubtless a dog drowned. Why should not Dixmer be there? Even a dog drowning will serve to pass away the time.' I approached the parapet, and beheld all along the high bank a crowd of people who, throwing their arms aloft into the air, and uttering loud exclamations, stooped down to gaze at something on the ground. I joined them, and also looked down. There was something! — Guess what it was."

"Dixmer!" said Maurice, in a gloomy tone.

"Yes. How could you guess that? Yes; it was Dixmer, killed by a ghastly wound. The unfortunate wretch had no doubt committed suicide in expiation of his guilt."

"Ah," said Maurice, with a sad smile, "do you think so?"

Geneviève let her head droop between her hands. She was too feeble to support these successive emotions.

"Yes; I thought so, from his blood-stained sword

being found near him; unless, indeed — he had met some one."

Maurice, without reply, availing himself of the moment when Geneviève, overpowered by emotion, did not observe him, opened his coat and displayed to Lorin his waistcoat and shirt stained with blood.

"Ah! that alters the case," said Lorin, as he held out his hand to Maurice. "Now," said he, whispering in his ear, "they have not searched me, seeing that I entered in Sanson's suite. I have still the knife, if the guillotine is too revolting to your feelings."

Maurice seized the weapon with a joyful expression.

"No," said he, "she would suffer too much," and he returned the knife to Lorin.

"You are right," said Lorin; "long live Monsieur Guillotine! Why, what is it, after all? A fillip on the neck, according to Danton. And what signifies a fillip?"

And he flung his knife in the midst of a group of the condemned, one of whom immediately seized and buried it in his breast. He was dead in an instant.

At the same moment Geneviève awoke, and uttered a piercing cry. She felt the pressure of the executioner's hand upon her shoulder.

CHAPTER LVI.

LONG LIVE SIMON !

At the sound of this cry Maurice understood that the struggle was about to commence. The influence of love may be able to exalt the soul to heroism, — it may, against natural instinct, impel a human being to desire death, but it had not in this instance extinguished the repugnance to pain. It was evident that Geneviève resigned herself the more patiently to death since Maurice was to die with her ; but resignation does not exclude suffering, and to quit this world is not only to fall into the abyss termed unknown, but also to suffer in the descent.

Maurice, at a glance, embraced the entire scene, and thought of what would follow.

In the centre of the hall lay the suicide, from whose breast the gendarme had just torn the weapon of destruction, fearing, probably, it might be used by some of the others.

Around him were several individuals mute with despair and scarcely heeding him, inscribing in their pocket-books some disconnected words, or pressing one another's hands ; some repeating, without any intermission, a cherished name, or bathing with tears a portrait, a ring, or tress of hair ; some venting imprecations against tyranny, a state of affairs cursed by all, ay sometimes even by the tyrants themselves. In the midst of these unfortunates, Sanson, oppressed less from his fifty years than his melancholy office, — Sanson, as mild, and as much their con-

soler as his terrible vocation permitted him to be, to this one offered advice, to that one some sad consolation or encouragement, finding some Christian responses to their accents of despair as well as to their bravado.

"Citizeness," said he to Geneviève, "I must remove your scarf, and cut off your hair, if you please."

Geneviève began to tremble.

"Come, dear lady," said Lorin, softly, "take courage!"

"May I remove the lady's hair?" asked Maurice.

"Oh, yes," cried Geneviève; "I entreat you to permit him to do so, Monsieur Sanson."

"He may," said the old man, turning away his head.

Maurice first took off his necktie, and Geneviève, stooping, fell on her knees before the young man, presenting her charming head, appearing more beautiful in her grief than she had ever been in her days of sunshine and happiness.

When Maurice had completed the funereal operation, his hands were so tremulous and his countenance betrayed so much grief that Geneviève exclaimed, —

"Ah! I am courageous, Maurice."

Sanson turned round.

"Is it not so, sir?" said Geneviève; "am I not courageous?'

"Certainly, Citizen," replied the executioner, in a perturbed voice, "for yours is true courage."

In the mean time the first assistant had glanced over the list forwarded by Fouquier Tinville.

"Fourteen," said he.

Sanson counted the condemned.

"Fifteen, including the dead," said he; "why, how is this?"

Lorin and Geneviève counted after him, both struck by the same thought.

"You say there are only fourteen condemned, and that we are fifteen?" said she.

"Yes; the Citizen Fouquier Tinville must have made a mistake."

"Ah! you spoke falsely, then," said Geneviève, turning to Maurice; "you were not condemned."

"And why wait for to-morrow, when you die to-day?" said Maurice.

"My love," said she, smiling, "you reassure me; I am now convinced that it is easy to die."

"Lorin," said Maurice, "now for the last time — no one here can recognize you — say that you came to bid me adieu; say that you have been shut in by mistake; call the gendarme who saw you go out. I am the true criminal who ought to die. But you, my friend, we beseech you to live to love our memory. There is yet time, Lorin; we entreat you!"

Geneviève joined her hands in an attitude of prayer. Lorin took both her hands and kissed them.

"I have said no, and I mean no," said Lorin, in a firm voice; "say no more on the subject, or I shall think I am a bore to you."

"Fourteen," repeated Sanson, "and here are fifteen;" then elevating his voice, "Is there any one here who can protest against this?" said he; "is there any one here who can prove he is here by mistake?"

Perhaps some lips half-opened at this question, but closed again without uttering a single word; since those who felt inclined to lie were ashamed to do so, and those who would not lie were determined not to speak.

A silence of several minutes ensued, during which the assistants continued their mournful office.

"Citizens, we are ready," said old Sanson, in his deep and solemn voice. He was answered only by sobs and groans.

"Well!" said Lorin, "so be it!

No death is nobler, none more high,
Than for our native land to die.

Yes, to die for our native land; but decidedly I begin to think we do not die for her, but for the pleasure of those who witness our deaths. Faith! Maurice, I have adopted your opinion. I am disgusted with the Republic!"

"The call!" said a commissary, at the door.

Several gendarmes entered the hall, closing up the issues, thus placing themselves between life and the condemned, as if to prevent them from returning to it.

The death-roll was called.

Maurice, who had witnessed the trial of the condemned man who had destroyed himself, when his name was called answered in his stead. They then found that, excepting the dead man, the number was correct.

The corpse was removed from the hall; but if the man's identity had been established, and he had been recognized as one condemned, he would have been guillotined with the rest, though already dead.

The survivors were pushed toward the outlet, in order that as each passed before the wicket his hands might be tied behind his back. For the space of ten minutes not a word was exchanged between these unfortunates; the executioners alone seemed endowed with life or motion.

Maurice, Geneviève, and Lorin, not being any longer able to retain their hold of each other, crowded together that they might not be separated.

When the condemned were removed from the Conciergerie into the court, the scene became truly appalling. Several grew faint at the sight of the carts, and the turnkeys were compelled to assist them to mount the steps of these vehicles of death. Behind the still closed doors

was heard the confused murmur of the crowd; and it might be inferred from the sound that the concourse was immense.

Geneviève courageously ascended the car; Maurice at her side sustained her; he sprang in rapidly after her.

Lorin did not hurry himself, but carefully selected his seat at the left of Maurice.

The doors opened, and foremost in the crowd stood Simon. The two friends immediately recognized him; indeed, the recognition was mutual. He was standing upon a fence near which the cars must pass, for there were three of them. The car containing our three friends moved first.

"Ah! good-day to you, my brave grenadier!" said Simon to Lorin; "you are going to try the effect of my leather-cutting machine, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Lorin; "and I will be careful not to notch it, that it may be ready when your turn comes."

The two remaining cars followed the direction of the first. And now commenced a terrific tempest of cries, shouts, groans, and maledictions, surrounding and following the condemned.

"Courage! Geneviève, take courage!" murmured Maurice.

"Oh!" replied the young woman, "I do not wish for life since I die with you. I regret only that my hands are tied, so that I cannot embrace you before I die."

"Lorin," said Maurice, "feel in my waistcoat pocket, there you will find a knife."

"Zounds!" said Lorin, "a penknife is the very thing needed; I should be ashamed to die, garroted like a calf."

Maurice placed his pocket on a level with his friend's hands; Lorin found the knife, which between them they

succeeded in opening. Maurice then placed it between his teeth, and severed the cord which bound Lorin's hands, who, the moment they were free, performed the same office for Maurice.

"Make haste!" said the young man; "Geneviève is fainting."

In fact, to accomplish this operation Maurice had for a moment turned from Geneviève, when, as if all her strength had been derived from him, her eyes closed, and her head sank upon her breast.

"Geneviève, open your eyes, my love," said Maurice; "we have only a few minutes more to see each other in this world."

"The cords wound me," murmured the young woman.

Maurice unbound them. She immediately re-opened her eyes, and rose, radiant with almost celestial beauty. She threw one fair arm around Maurice's neck, and with the other hand took that of Lorin; and thus, all three standing in the cart, with two more victims lying at their feet wrapped in the stupor of anticipated death, they gazed toward heaven with a look of ardent gratitude for having been permitted to support and console each other, while those who had outraged and insulted them previously were now perfectly silent. The scaffold was in sight. Maurice and Lorin beheld it. Geneviève did not; she saw naught but her lover. The car stopped.

"I love thee!" said Maurice to Geneviève; "I love thee!"

"The woman first! the woman first!" shouted a thousand voices.

"Thanks, good people," said Maurice; "who then can call you cruel?"

He took Geneviève within his arms, pressed his lips *fondly* upon hers, and delivered her to Sanson.

"Courage!" cried Lorin; "courage!"

"I have it!" said Geneviève; "I have it!"

"I love thee!" murmured Maurice; "I love thee!"

They were no longer victims about to be slaughtered, but friends making a festival of death.

"Adieu!" cried Geneviève to Lorin.

"Farewell, till we meet again!" replied he.

And Geneviève disappeared under the fatal drop.

"After you," said Lorin.

"After you," replied Maurice.

"Hark! she calls you."

At this moment Geneviève uttered her last cry.

"Come!" said she.

A furious uproar took place in the crowd. The fair and graceful head had fallen.

Maurice rushed forward.

"It is exactly correct," said Lorin; "let us follow logic. Do you hear me, Maurice?"

"Yes."

"She loved you, and they have murdered her first; you are not condemned, and therefore die the second; and I, who have done nothing, being the greatest criminal of the three, die the last.

> And thus you see how passing clear
> Logic makes everything appear.

Good faith! Citizen Sanson, I promised you a quatrain; but you must be content with a distich."

"I did love thee!" murmured Maurice, lying on the fatal plank, and smiling at the head of his beloved, — "I did lo —" The knife cut short the last word.

"Now for my turn!" cried Lorin, bounding on the scaffold, "and be quick, or I shall lose my head! Citizen

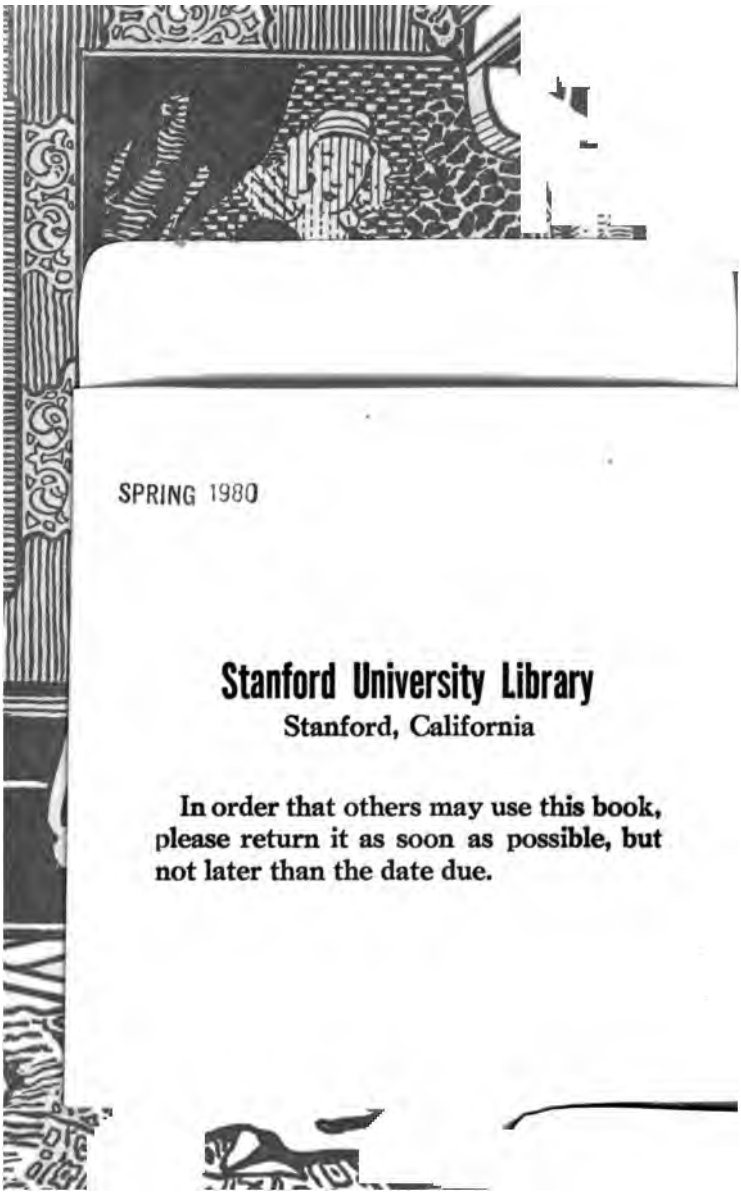
Sanson, I owe you two verses, instead of which I offer you a pun."

Sanson placed him in his turn.

"Let us see," said Lorin, — "it is the fashion to cry long live something, when dying. Once it was, 'Vive le Roi,' but now there is no king; next the cry was, 'Vive la Liberté,' but there is no more liberty. Faith, Long live Simon! say I, who unites us all three."

And the head of the generous and noble-hearted young man fell near those of Maurice and Geneviève.

THE END.



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